

TRACTS
OF
THE ANGLICAN FATHERS.

PRACTICAL.

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P R E F A C E.

THE duties of the Christian—those duties which form the subject matter of the present volume—were once comprised by our Lord in those of love towards God and love towards our neighbour.

The great difference between the present state of mankind and that in which he was when God pronounced him very good, consists not so much in his understanding becoming dark, as in his heart becoming hard. It is true that the eyes of his mind are to many objects blinded, and that with regard to all, he looks at them through a false medium; but this is not to be compared with the depravity of his heart—he has lost that fervent love, that universal charity, in which consisted his chief likeness to his almighty Creator, and in place thereof a cold, unvarying selfishness has become the governing principle of his life. It was not the least mark of the wickedness of the world that men should, in the last and most corrupt days, be lovers of their own selves; and this feeling, though necessary to our very existence, is that against which we have the greatest occasion to guard. It matters not that men are only in imagination lovers of their own selves; that could their eyes be opened to behold the awful realities of eternity, they would find that so far from loving, they were really hating their own souls; for while the shadows of this world stand around them, and assume the appearance of substance—while the temptations which the father of lies so well knows how to prepare, are present in all their glittering and alluring beauty, the carnal mind, which cannot discern spiritual things, will still place its felicity in the pleasures of earth, and snatch them only the more eagerly, because forbidden by the Spirit of God. The uncertainty which hangs over the prospects of the unrenewed man must naturally induce

him to make the best use of the present time, and to live in the enjoyment of pleasures which may last but for a short time, and never be restored.

Beyond the grave he has no expectations; he shrinks from examining the evidences of a future existence, and takes refuge from the occasional thoughts of death in lethargic indifference, in dissipation, or in scepticism. Perhaps he may shelter himself behind that most dangerous, but too common excuse, that he has never done any harm, and so, supposing that hell is only for robbers and murderers, he goes on in the same godless, unconcerned way. Such a person may deserve and obtain the good opinion of his fellow-creatures; he may do good to them that do good to him; he may love them that love him; and the world will not be very censorious if he hate his enemies, and if he proceed on the principle avowed by them of old time—"an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." The Christian, however, is taught that vengeance belongeth unto God, and is to be left to him, and to those whom he has ordained as governors. He is bound to love all men. Some, because they are co-heirs with him of the glorious kingdom of everlasting life, are the objects of his warm approving love; some, because they are as yet only inheritors of eternal death, are the objects of his pitying affection. It is the rebellion that he hates, while he cherishes a kindness of heart towards the rebel; and he merges all his private feelings in this one great pervading principle. To a state like this must the human heart be brought before it can be acceptable to God, but to such a state it is only by his grace that it can be brought at all.

The same character was required of old as is required now. The patriarchs, though less enlightened, were as pure in heart and as fervent in love as the apostles; their faith was as strong, their hopes as firm, and the foundation of their faith and hope was the same. Hence it is that "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" was not a new commandment given by our Lord, nor was it even the sense of the second table, epitomized in his own words, but it was a direct command of the Mosaic law, and intended to be a recapitulation of those commands which

involved the social duties. In the book of Leviticus (chap. xix.), we find all the precepts of the law enforced and explained, and the explanation and recapitulation concludes thus—“Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt not in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him. Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Lord.” If we compare these passages with the traditions of the Jews in the time of our Saviour, we shall see how grossly the Pharisees had corrupted the law, and how justly they merited the awful curses which our Lord pronounced against them. They did their utmost to bring down the pure and holy law to the beggarly elements of mere outward observance—lie asserted its high and spiritual nature.

It was not, as many think in the present day, to raise the standard of acceptance with God, to require a loftier character than that which the law of Moses had required, that our Lord was made man. It was to perform that great atonement, by the prospective virtue of which all the righteous had been saved from the beginning of the world. It was to lift up, to a great degree, the curtain which covered God’s majestic designs, that man, seeing somewhat more than had ever yet been revealed, might press forward to a full illumination. It was to give higher sanctions, a less burdensome institution, and a more certain hope. What, then, is the principle which is wanting in the carnal man—what is that grace which made the Jew, and which makes the Christian believer pleasing in the sight of the All Holy One of Israel? It is love—love to God and love to man. The apostle says—“For love is the fulfilling of the law.”

It may be observed that love to God, if sincere and deeply-rooted, will of itself include every grace, and ensure the fulfilment of every command. But our Lord gives it, as did Moses, in two parts; and we have indeed cause to thank our divine Teacher that he has given us line upon line, and precept upon precept. The Bible is a book for all men, and it is so plain that he who runs may read. We are not obliged to deduce one duty from the injunction of another; the conclusion and the

argument are given as well as the premises; were it otherwise, the skilful and the learned might prove, by legitimate inference, what duties those were which holy Scripture enjoins—as it is, they are all separately set down, all separately explained, and all separately enforced.

We shall first call attention to that important fact—one which cannot too much be inculcated—that religion is the spring of every virtue, and that in proportion as the love of God burns in the human heart, in the same proportion will every moral, every social, every political virtue appear in human conduct. No man who looks up to the divine Author of his being with that calm, child-like confidence, which is the high privilege of the Christian who meditates on his word, who sanctifies his Sabbath, and who reverences his name, can fail to be struck with the blackness of ingratitude which is exhibited by those who fear him not; but while he sees thus in its true colours the atrocity of irreligion, he sees also its inevitable consequences—his heart is filled with pity for the sinners, and his endeavours are earnest to snatch them from the danger wherein they have placed themselves. So far from cherishing ill-will towards any, he looks back at that state of criminality from which it pleased God to rescue him, and contrasting his state with that in which he was, and they are, the words of anger die away into a prayer of mingled love and pity, and he exclaims, “And this also we wish, even your salvation.” Is the man whose spirit is lifted within the veil, and who holds mystic converse with his Maker, likely to be carried away by the lusts of the flesh? Is he whose heart and treasure are in a world afar, unchangeable and incorruptible, likely to be dazzled by the gold when it shineth, or by the brightness of the silver? No—he is a traveller who is hastening onward to a land where there is neither sorrow nor darkness, where the costliest gems of this world are but as the dust in the balance, and where his companions will be the unspotted angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. The spirits of the mine may hold out their glittering dross, and the sirens of pleasure may sing in their bowers of enchantment, but *his* eye is fixed on the Captain of his salvation, his ear only

hears the call, “Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

But we must pass onward to consider the two parts of which our duty is composed. “What (as a certain lawyer said to our Lord) is the first and great commandment?” The lawyer who put the question put it in a spirit of captiousness; he probably wished, by obtaining the opinion of our Lord as to the greatness of one commandment, to have deduced a sort of license for neglecting the rest, and then he might satisfactorily have made his appearance before the Pharisees as an accuser of Jesus, without the crime of perjury. But that generation of vipers had to do with divine wisdom as well as divine purity; instead of one command he received two—both commands of Moses, and both embodying together the ten of the decalogue—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy heart, and with all thy mind; this is the first and great commandment.” We are not told that Christ entered into any further explanation with the evil-minded casuist, and we must therefore seek the full meaning of these expressive words in other portions of holy writ. The spring of obedience is love, as the test of love is obedience. “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” We may have a very satisfactory knowledge of God’s word; we may be able to talk well, and, it may be, to dispute logically about religion, but unless we are filled with the love of Christ we shall not keep his words, we cannot keep them. Satan and the hosts he drew after him are far better acquainted with the mysteries of providence than we are; they have clearer views of God’s greatness, and perchance, also, a greater insight into his almighty designs, than we have, but they are yet mocking the counsel of the Omniscient, and waging open war with the Omnipotent. We do not know the particulars of their fall—we know only that they were holy and happy. There is a depth of iniquity which it has not pleased God that man should understand; and when the Eternal hurled them from the celestial circle in which they sung his praise into the blackness of darkness for ever, we know that he justly punished some enormous act of rebellion, but it has not been revealed what that act was.

Since then the tempter has been abroad in the world ; all the earthly blessings given to us for good have been made, by the craft of Satan, the means of man's destruction ; but he has not been permitted to set his own original sin before us as a temptation, for that was an unpardonable offence, and God, willing that none should perish, has declared that the Gospel of the kingdom was ever, and is now, effectual for the purification of every sin.

But though we know not what was the offence by which the angels who fell lost the favour of their Creator, we can gather one fearful difference between their condition and that of fallen man from the pages of Scripture. They are confined in chains of darkness till the day when they shall be cast into everlasting fire, prepared for them from the beginning of the world. That vast and awful storehouse of wrath, though not prepared for man, will yet receive those who reject God's mercy ; whereas Christ our Saviour is gone to prepare a place for us in the fulness of glory. And it hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive such good things as God hath laid up for them who love him.

Such being the difference, it follows, that with all their knowledge, the fallen angels do not, cannot love their Creator. Therefore, since love is the spring of obedience, they cannot keep his commandments ; and, indeed, so dreadful is their state, that they have no commandments to keep. They are alike without the pale of law and of mercy ; and the vengeance of Him whom they defied, is coming on swiftly and steadily towards them. From a condition so awful we have time to escape. The law of the Lord is before us, and we find it, though impracticable to our unrenewed nature, yet easily performed by the aid of the holy Spirit.

Let us then suppose one, to whom much has been forgiven ; the chains with which he was bound are struck off—the debt is remitted—the prison doors are open, and the captive is free. Does he wander about to seek a shelter ? No ! The Lord, who has forgiven him his debt and his rebellion, and his insolent warfare, has taken him by the hand, has led him into his own

palace, has received him into the number of his chosen friends, and placed him at his own table. He has promised him a kingdom, in a far but glorious country, and has enriched him with treasures too splendid to be computed. And, oh ! the air of tenderness with which this was done—the love which beamed from the eyes, and shone forth in the actions of that Lord, when he tells his now contrite and pardoned follower, that for him, when arrayed in arms feeble indeed, but still daring against his Lord, he has sacrificed his own only begotten Son. No reproaches for his past crimes—no angry threats for the future. The present is a moment of reconciliation, and the future is a future of undimmed hope. How will that man feel towards his Lord ? His heart will pour itself forth in his praise ; he will indeed love him with all his mind. There will be no more another object of his allegiance. Other lords may have had dominion over him—he may have bowed down to the throne of other powers, but henceforth he serves but one King, the King who has called him. When he speaks of his benefactor, it will be to exalt his power, to magnify his glory, to testify his amazing love. Far from using his name lightly or irreverently, he will allow none to do so, nor will he even think of him but as a mighty King and a beneficent Redeemer. How cheerfully will he pay homage, when the times appointed for so doing come round ; with what reverence will he bow down before his Lord, and with what delight will he mingle in the song of thanksgiving.

The second commandment is like unto the former, dependent upon it, and inseparable from it. These channels are not separate—they flow on in one broad, deep, undivided stream, and they will carry our souls into the haven of eternal peace. We are to love God primarily, for himself alone, and with all the energies of our nature ; from him, as the light from a mirror, will our love be reflected upon his works, and we shall ourselves equally share in the general reflection. “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”—the very equality shows that the affections must have passed through some purifying medium, and it is only then that they are exercised aright, when our love to God is at once their reason and their rule. “He (says St.

Augustine) loves God but imperfectly, who loves aught beside him, and not on his account; man should begin by loving God, and he will then love nothing in man, except God.” There is, therefore, no division of our affections; they centre in him from whom they originally sprang, and, like the rivers, that all terminate in the sea, yet, while they keep this constant communication ever open, flow through and fertilize a thousand lands, so our love, while it warms towards every child of Adam, and illustrates every moment of the Christian’s life, is yet never withdrawn from him, who is at once its high source and its only lawful claimant. It is his: he bestows it upon whatever objects he pleases, and he commands us to love our neighbours as ourselves.

This comprises the sum of the second table of the decalogue, as the other does of the first. A few moments’ consideration will show us how exactly this is the case, and how naturally this command grows, as it were, out of the other. Wheresoever there is a man, the follower of Christ recognizes a brother; even his bitterest enemy is the object of his earnest and affectionate prayer. If this be a duty, how much more is it one to love those that love him, and to do good to those that do good to him. The man who loves not his enemy is ungrateful to God; for he breaks the command of that Being from whom he receives all the blessings which he enjoys: but if he loves not his friends he is doubly ungrateful—his crime extends to man as well as to God, and man will certainly avenge it, however God may seem to pass it over in this world.

While here on earth we are in a state of probation. We must expect tribulation; “for if we receive not chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards, and not sons.” Yet it is the intention of our divine Master that this world should be a happy abode—that it should serve as a calm and hopeful preparation for a blissful eternity. It is to this end that he has given us such laws as (if followed) will promote and secure the peace of society—it is to this end that he has ordained civil magistrates, and required our obedience to their controul; and it is to this end that he has promulgated amidst thunderings, and lightnings, and earthquakes, and the voice of the trumpet, the

great principles of civil and social duty. He has given them the same sanctions as the commands which enjoin his own worship, and he will visit their violation with the same severity. The first in the list of these duties is naturally that of love, honour, and obedience to our earthly parents.

This is the precept which is first to be obeyed ; because willing obedience may be yielded to this before the others can be disobeyed at all. It is also a type of the relation subsisting between us and our heavenly Father ; and the earthly things can but faintly represent those of heaven, yet this is as near an approach as can be made to represent the love of God towards his people, to picture it as that of a father to his children. Murder, theft, and uncleanness !—can these be the fruits of that spirit which makes man love his neighbour as himself ?—which induces him to protect the persons, to guard the property, to defend the reputation, and to watch over the honour of his neighbours ; which makes him jealous over them with a godly jealousy, and determined to suffer no sin among them ? No !—these are the instigations of him who hates with a vehement hatred ; God, because he has broken his law—and man, because the creature of God. Falsehood and perjury are equally impossible ; and covetousness, which is only to be corrected by a renewal of the mind, a fixing of the affections on things above, will be met and suppressed by reflections on the shortness of life, the certainty of death, and the awful question, “ What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? ”

And this was the nature, these the requirements of the law of Moses—the words which our Saviour hallowed by pronouncing had been spoken by Moses before. The purity of heart, and the universal love which Christ required, had been before announced as indispensable to acceptance with God. “ My son, give me thine heart,” was the demand made under the old covenant. He will accept of no sacrifice without that ; nor will he accept of that unless he have it wholly, unreservedly. The church militant on earth, and the church triumphant in heaven, cherubim and seraphim, and the great multitude of the

heavenly host, love the divine Author of their being fervidly and without reserve. Yet can their united affection equal his love to them? It cannot, any more than the voice of their unceasing praise can equal the perfections of Him whom they magnify. When, therefore, we offer our hearts on the altar of God, we must be fully aware of the unworthiness of the sacrifice, and account it not the least of his mercies, that, fallen as we are, he permits, nay commands us, to love him. Wherein, then, may we ask, consists the difference between the Jewish and the Christian dispensation; wherein lies the incalculable superiority of the latter? It is the perfection of that scheme, whereof the former was only the beginning. The same pure and holy character is required; but we have a divine pattern before our eyes. We have more distinct promises, more clear directions, plainer land-marks, on our heavenward road. Besides this, we have the Comforter sent down to us; and we have the promise of our now glorified Lord to be with his people, even to the end of the world. The whole world is called to repentance and faith; the wall of perdition, which shut in the chosen people and shut out the Gentile, is beaten down. The types and shadows of the ceremonial law are finished; the veil of the temple is rent in twain, and we are permitted to behold the glory of the Gospel dispensation—the mercy seat of our Lord's humanity! All this the patriarchs and prophets saw as through a glass, darkly: to us they appear without a cloud, and the light that strikes upon our eyes penetrates to the heart.

But because we hear so much in the present day of conscience, we will devote a few pages to the consideration of its nature and office.

Conscience, it may be said, is an inward monitor, which approves of our conduct when right, and disapproves of it when wrong. We shall, therefore, consider—

1. What is right and what is wrong.

2. How far conscience is a safe guide, and what is its nature and office. And

3. How its errors may be corrected.

The enquiry into the nature of good and evil has been, in all

ages, a problem to the wise—an object of deep interest and constant study to the philosopher. To say that virtue or righteousness is right, and that vice or wickedness is wrong, is but expressing the same fact in other words; it is but telling us that what is good is good, and that what is evil is evil. The question still remains, What is virtue and what is vice? And here we find a great number of answers proposed. It is virtue, say the ancients, to live according to our nature. There are, say others, certain principles existing of necessity, by their accordance or non-accordance to which, all actions may be pronounced right or wrong. These principles are termed collectively, the eternal fitness of things. Now it will seem strange to assert that this latter is the opinion of almost every man—I say, it will seem strange, because presented to their view in this form. The greater part of mankind will scarcely understand it; nor, indeed, have they ever considered the matter at all in a philosophical way. But we will take an instance which will at once explain and illustrate our assertion. The true Christian will, of course, say, and say truly, that virtue consists in obeying, and vice in resisting the law of God; but if an example be proposed—truth, for instance—he will say, that the very nature of God is abhorrent to falsehood, and that, therefore, he has directed his law against its practice; that is, that the same law which obtains in human nature, obtains also in the divine nature; and that the reason why God cannot lie, is because his nature is conformable to truth alone, and because of his exceeding hatred of sin. Now in all this, there lurks an unsuspected error. The truth is, that the nature of God has nothing to do with the question, nor are there of necessity any such fixed principles of right and wrong as we have spoken of under the name of the eternal fitness of things. Of the divine nature, we know absolutely nothing. When we say that God cannot lie, because he hates falsehood with an entire hatred—that the good man is exceedingly unwilling to lie, because he has much hatred for it, and that even the bad man thinks with regret upon his violations of truth, because even in his mind there is some little dislike to falsehood remaining—we make the perfection of God to

be of the same kind, though greater in degree, than that of men, and we imply that there are laws immutable in their nature, and binding on the Supreme Being himself. Now, when it is asserted that we know absolutely nothing of the divine nature, we wish to be understood as speaking of the mode of his existence and the motives of his dealings. We do know that he is gracious and merciful—that, in the emphatic language of the apostle, “ God is love;” but we know also, that he is so of his own free and sovereign pleasure, and that there is no necessity whatever for him either to be or to continue so. There was a time, when, out of nothing, God called all creation into existence. Before that period, he had existed in solitary glory from all eternity. There had been neither space nor duration; and however incomprehensible existence without space or duration may be to the human intellect, we are compelled to admit it, or we must, by supposing space and duration to have existed from all eternity, suppose them to be self-existent, and, therefore, partaking of the divine nature. Now it will be at once perceived, that in this state of God’s sole existence, there could be no such things as virtue and vice; and if, out of reverence, we apply the term *good* to the Almighty himself before all creation, it is evident that it cannot be with reference to any other beings or states, inasmuch as none other existed. But when space and time—heaven and earth—angels and men—were created, it seemed good to the great Maker of all, to regulate his work by certain laws—inert matter by laws applicable to it, and the rational and intelligent part of his family by moral obligations adapted to their state. Now it pleased him so to arrange the moral and physical universe that what we call virtue—that is, conduct of a certain kind, according to certain rules—is adapted to promote the happiness of the creature, and, consequently, the glory of the Creator. But it would have been possible for him to have constructed the universe on a scheme totally different—indeed, diametrically opposite—and had he done so, which is a very supposable case, every one of those principles which so many persons imagine to be immutable, would be replaced by one, the tendency of which is exactly the reverse. That which is now virtue, would

then have been vice, and that which is now vice, would have been virtue. To conceive a state of things like this, is impossible to us, because our minds, our senses, and the whole constitution of nature, are adapted to a state precisely the contrary. There is the same difficulty in realizing the idea, as in a blind man forming a notion of colours, or a deaf man of sounds, when both have been born deprived of those powers ; but by imagining not only one thing, but all things changed, we shall gradually get a dim view of the possibility of what is asserted. Take an instance from the material world. If the nature of water be changed as to every one of its qualities—its power of extinguishing fire among the rest—then, while the nature of fire remains unaltered, the relation now subsisting between those elements is evidently destroyed ; but if the fire be equally and reciprocally changed, then the former relation between them is restored, though in a reverse order. Let the mind carry out this principle into the moral world, and the possibility to which we have alluded will become apparent. We learn, then, that whatsoever is in accordance with the will of God is therefore right, and whatsoever is contrary to that will is therefore wrong. Prayer and praise are right, because they are acceptable to God ; but if we should say that prayer and praise are acceptable to God because they are right, we should be in error—an error from which the Brahmins of the East are free. The revealed will of God should be the principle and the test of our actions. We can have no higher principle, nor ought we to be content with a lower.

It follows from what we have just advanced, that to distinguish right from wrong is the province of the intellect ; and this leads us to our second consideration, viz.—

The nature and office of conscience, and the question how far it is a safe guide.

We shall endeavour, then, to show, that conscience is a part, not of our intellectual, but of our moral nature, and its office is consequently, not to show us how to decide, but to prompt us how to act.

When the intellect has distinguished what is right and what is wrong, then the part of conscience is to persuade us to the one,

and dissuade us from the other. That this is the fact is plain from the cases alluded to by St. Paul, in the eighth chapter of the first of Corinthians, where he speaks of meat offered to idols. The intellect was weak in these cases, and the man could not perceive the non-importance of the idol ; the conscience was feeble, and he could not resist the temptation, and his conscience, being weak, was defiled. But we often meet with instances where the intellect is weak and the conscience is strong. We find persons who make it a matter of conscience, and that in all truth and sincerity, to eat fish, and not meat, on a fast-day—to refuse taking an oath before a magistrate—to decline giving the usual names to days and months—and to do many things as matters of vital moment, which are, in truth, matters of no moment at all. One believeth that he may eat all things—another, who is weak, that is, weak in intellect, but strong in conscience, eateth herbs ; but if we look with pity upon persons such as these, how must we at once pity and detest those in whom the intellect is strong, and the conscience weak—those who see clearly what is right and what is wrong, but whose consciences are, as it were, seared with a hot iron, and with scarcely any compunction they choose to do evil ? Hence we learn that it is very possible for a person to do wrong with a good conscience ; for if he should mistake the nature of an action, conscience will not set him right. It will merely prompt him to act as his judgment has already decided to be correct. It is a natural feeling implanted in us by the great Author of our being, and the question, whether there be such a thing as a moral sense, or a natural conscience, concerning which so many volumes have been written, and so many philosophers have contended—a question which the great Paley himself left undecided—rests entirely on an error. That error is to suppose conscience an intellectual power, and its office, that of deciding between right and wrong, exciting us to the one, and warning us against the other. If it be asked, how is it, then, that one kind of actions, viz., those which are just and prudent and benevolent, do obtain, in all ages, and in all countries, general approbation, and another kind of actions, viz., those which are unjust, imprudent, and malevolent, general

disapprobation—we reply, that this has nothing to do with the existence of a natural moral sense, but that it arises—first, from the traditional knowledge of right and wrong derived from Adam, and which, in spite of the wide-spread corruption of human nature, has never been entirely lost ; next, to the repeated revelations of the divine will, and the publication of the moral law—events whose influence was not confined to the persons who witnessed the one, or the nation whose code of laws was based on the other ; thirdly, to the natural intellect of man, which leads him to perceive that virtue is generally profitable, and vice prejudicial, to the common interest of all ; and lastly, to that education which, influenced more or less by these causes, does, with greater or less urgency, inculcate righteousness and deprecate wickedness.

We have endeavoured, and trust, not altogether without success, to show that there is such a thing as a natural conscience, but that not being an intellectual power, it requires to be guided by that which *is*. The questions which concern us, then, are—

1. How far is it probable that conscience is enlightened, and, therefore, a safe guide. And,
2. How far errors in judgment excuse us from the guilt of any actions they may cause.

To the first question, then, we reply, that it depends upon the education of the individual ; not upon his knowledge of science, or history, or literature, or philosophy, but upon his moral, practical, and religious education. Let a youth be brought up in the fear of the Lord—let him be taught the word of God, and brought to the ordinances of the temple—and there will be no doubt, if he have the use of his reason, that his conscience will be an enlightened, and, consequently, a safe guide. The more powerful is his intellect, the more certainly will his conscience be enlightened. Thus, also, the consciences of men in a Christian country will be more enlightened than those of men in a land of heathenism—in a civilized land, than in a barbarous one—in a Protestant, than a Popish country. The case of St. Paul was a peculiar one. So great were the prejudices of his education, and so forcible the arguments by which those preju-

dices were supported, that his intellect, powerful and cultivated as it was, was not likely to bring him to the knowledge of the truth. (When we speak thus of the knowledge of the truth, we allude to that theoretical knowledge which is the province of the understanding—not that practical knowledge which is caused by the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the heart.) Access to genuine information was, in St. Paul's case, so difficult that it pleased God to call him by a miracle.

Having thus stated this fact, that the enlightenment of conscience depends upon education—a fact which might be proved at large, if, indeed, it be not self-evident to all minds—we must enter a caution against imagining that an enlightened conscience necessarily supposes a strong conscience, or a correct practice. These are things totally different. A man may, if well educated, and particularly if his understanding be acute, see very clearly, in every action, whether it be right or wrong; and hence we call the conscience of this man enlightened. But he may be very little checked by it, if he do the wrong and neglect the right; he may feel very little remorse for actions which he knows well, and knew before their commission, to be criminal. This man has an enlightened, but a weak conscience.

Again: a person may not only know clearly concerning his actions, whether they be right or wrong, but may also feel the greatest difficulty in overcoming the resistance which his conscience makes to the commission of sin, and the greatest remorse afterwards. Yet so strong may be his passions, that, in spite of all this, he persists in the practice of evil. Here, then, we have an instance—alas! too common among men—of a strong conscience, and an enlightened conscience, being accompanied by an unrighteous life. Such a man loves and approves the right, while yet he neglects it; he hates and despises the wrong, while he yet practises it. Strength of conscience is a part of a man's natural disposition, as much as an amiable character or a sullen temper may be. It varies in various individuals, and there are some in whom the feeling is scarcely perceptible. Enlightenment of conscience depends upon education, and varies, of course, as the instruction bestowed. But a pure and holy life is only to

be found as the fruits of a true and lively faith. Now, since conscience thus varies in different persons to so great a degree, both by reason of their original mental constitution and moral tendencies, and also of their education, the question becomes an important one, how far errors in judgment excuse us from the guilt of the actions which they cause ; that is, how far any action can be considered criminal which the conscience of the doer approves. That such an action is, if wrong in itself, to a certain extent criminal, under almost every circumstance, is expressly laid down as a fact by our Lord, who says, “ Those who knew not their Lord’s will, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.” Now, had there not been some guilt they would not be beaten at all. All we have to do, then, is to ascertain the extent of this guilt, and, consequently, the extent of the excuse offered by an erring conscience. We shall suppose, of course, that the enquiry concerning any action is put in a spirit of honesty—that is, that the doer does really believe in his conscience that he did right, while, at the same time, he actually did a morally wrong action. This, of course, can only be decided by the individual himself, and he also only can judge as to his intentions. Thus much mischief may be done unintentionally, and, consequently, no moral guilt be incurred. But when an action has turned out as the doer intended it to do, then we have to consider how far his belief that he is right exonerates him from guilt, if the action be wrong. This belief may arise from two causes, *viz.*, an intellectual incapacity to comprehend the moral bearings of the case, or a lack of information as to the revealed will of God. Now, so far as the first reason can be fairly given, it must be valid, for it makes the individual irresponsible, by putting him on a level of an idiot—at least, there are very few cases in which it does not do so ; and we therefore pass on to consider the second reason, *viz.*, for lack of information touching the revealed will of God. This excuse, it is evident, will be of different force, under different circumstances. If the will of a master were written indeed, but locked up, so that his servants had no way of coming at it themselves, and no means of knowing from those formerly employed by their master what it was

—if the circumstances under which they were hired, the place to which they were taken, and the nature of their employment, gave them no insight into their master's intentions—then there could evidently be no fault in them if they failed to fulfil those intentions. There is, however, no parallel case to this among mankind. If such servants were sent to a distant part of their master's estate, where, though they had no positive instructions from him, yet those who had been before them had given them an account of the master's instructions when he had visited that part many years before—if the nature of the land, and the character of the crops, proved clearly what sort of conduct was necessary on their part; then, though little inaccuracies might be passed over, yet gross demerit would merit, and certainly receive, severe punishment. This case illustrates the condition of the heathen, and we see, therefore, why they were a law by nature unto themselves, and how their consciences might be, though not wholly enlightened, yet sufficiently so to cause a correct moral life. But again: if that master's will were written, and hung up where all his servants might have free access to it, and if, lest they should mistake the meaning of its provisions, he had set apart certain of his servants to explain that will at stated times to the rest, it follows that ignorance on the part of any one of those servants would not be the slightest excuse for not doing their Lord's will, but that he would both deserve and receive the same punishment as though, with a full knowledge of what they were, he had refused obedience to his lord's commands. This last is our case; and as, therefore, an unenlightened conscience among us must be one in a state of wilful darkness, it matters not what a man may think of his own doings, to the law and the testimony, and if they agree not with that, except he repent, he shall assuredly perish. The person, therefore, who withholds, or who does that which tends to withhold spiritual instruction from the people, especially from the poor, and more particularly still, from the children of the poor, will not, unless he shut up all our churches, and burn all our Bibles, diminish their responsibility, though he will accumulate on his own head an awful weight of guilt. They will have as much to answer for,

as though he had not attempted to snatch from their lips the bread of life, while the fearful criminality of the attempt will rest upon his own soul.

We see, then, the importance of enlightening the conscience. We see from the example of St. Paul that is not always a safe guide, and that its errors do not extenuate guilt. It becomes, lastly, then, a matter of infinite moment to know, if conscience be not a safe guide, how may it be made so ; or rather, what is a safe guide ? We answer, the Scriptures of truth. There we find the commands of God, which we are bound to follow ; there we find the promise of that grace by which we shall be enabled to do so ; there we find the publication of that Gospel by which God can be at once just and merciful--can forgive us all those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and yet maintain the unsullied purity of his most holy law. By applying to that ever-open fountain, the sins that oppress us with remorse shall be washed away. By studying that inspired book, we shall find the word of God “a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.” We must lift up our hearts to him who refuseth not any who come to him in the name of Jesus, to purify our hearts with his spirit, and so to set before us the greatness of his love, and the terrors of his coming, that we may both fear to offend, and earnestly desire to please him, through the grace of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Before concluding this preface, it may be well, as the present volume concludes the series of *Tracts of the Anglican Fathers*, briefly to recapitulate the objects with which the series was commenced. The unhappy divisions in our Church have arisen, it may fearlessly be asserted, from a want of information as to the views held by the Fathers both of the early, and of the Reformed English Church. The latter did most faithfully represent the opinions, both as to *doctrine*, *discipline*, and *practice*, of the Fathers of the first three centuries. When, therefore, their works were studied, and the sentiments held by them, and embodied in the Articles and Liturgy of our Church, were compared with the writings which remain to us from the apostolic era, it became evident that both taught the same doctrines, en-

forced the same discipline, and enjoined the same practice. The *Tracts of the Anglican Fathers* was undertaken in order to show those who reverted to antiquity that our Church was in accordance with the purest period of that antiquity, and to prove to those who despised antiquity, that they could not despise it without at the same time despising the Church of which they professed to be members.

The first volume was devoted, in accordance with this plan, to the examination of the authorized formularies of the Church; the second to an investigation of some principal points of doctrine; the third, to an enquiry into the principles, both primitive and Anglican, of ecclesiastical discipline;—and in the present and concluding volume an attempt has been made to classify the various duties of men, and to enforce them in the words, and by the authority, of some of our best divines.

The division of duties adopted has been—1. Those which we owe to God: this has occupied two parts. 2. Those which we owe to the Church. 3. Those which we owe to society. 4. Those which we owe to those connected with us. And last, those which we owe to the State. We cannot close this undertaking without imploring the divine blessing upon our endeavours.

C.

CAMBRIDGE.

St. Mark's Day.

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ON PRAYER.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND HUGH LATIMER, BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

THE NATURE OF FAITH.

BY THE REV. ISAAC BARROW, D.D., MASTER, TRIN. COLL., CAM.

LOVE TO GOD.

BY THE RIGHT REV. ARTHUR LAKE, D.D., BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS.

THE DUTY OF HOLINESS.

BY THE MOST REV. JOHN TILLOTSON, D.D., ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

ON GOOD WORKS.

BY THE RT. REV. GILBERT BURNET, D.D., BISHOP OF SARUM.

INTRODUCTION.

THE duties which the Christian owes to God form the first, because the most fundamental, parts of his system of practice. It has been well remarked by an able theologian, that he who would regulate the human affections must address himself, not to the understanding merely, or even chiefly, but must inculcate the one duty of faith. It is in vain that we discuss the advantages of virtue, or set forth the miseries which result from vice : this has been done over and over again by the wisest and best of the ancient philosophers ; but it was soon evident that there was something yet wanting—something which the morality of heathenism could not supply, and which the experience of ages had failed to furnish. Each separate passion and each separate feeling may be appealed to in vain ; but when that which is the spring and source of every action is effectually reached, and the principle of a true and lively faith is implanted within, then, and not before, all the other emotions and capabilities of the human nature are turned into their right channel, and, like deep rivers, that roll onward perpetually towards the ocean, the source from which their streams are originally derived, the heart returns to the first and only legitimate object of its adoration.

When God came down and communed with men, and gave a visible token of his presence when he visited transgressors with the sword, and the famine, and the pestilence ; and rewarded obedience with wealth, and rank, and power—it does seem a matter of surprise that, in spite of all this, his people should forsake him and worship Baalim. But when we come to reflect that the heart of man has been, in all ages, the same, and that infidelity takes its shape from the circumstances of the times, we shall less wonder at the children of Israel, and be the more humbled for our own delinquency. In their days there was but little light, save that which proceeded immediately from God : their intellects were not sharpened by study or meditation ; they

knew themselves a chosen people, and seem to have trusted very much in the merits of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It may also be said, in explanation, not in extenuation, of their idolatries, that an idea seemed generally to prevail of the unity of God—that is, that all nations worshipped the same God, though with different rites and under various appellations. Hence, though the wickedness remains the same, the absurdity is somewhat alleviated of that speech, “These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.” Others entertained an idea that different parts of the earth were under the government and protection of separate divinities; and accordingly we find the captains of Benhadad saying, after their defeat by Ahab, “Their gods are gods of the hills, and not of the plains; therefore let us fight against them in the plains, and verily we shall be stronger than they.” Others again supposed that, among the variety of deities, there were some more powerful in particular acts, at particular seasons; and this was the case with the Egyptian magicians. At all events, idolatry was the prevailing prejudice of the time. The great and the illustrious, the warlike and the learned, were idolators; they had their own tales of miracles, and wonders, and judgments, to relate; and it was always in their power to say, “What though the gods be now inactive; who can say how soon they may arise and put forth their might?” as they were reported to have done in the old times. Now it appears, from the very existence of this command, that the Israelites did fall in with some of these notions. The rites of the nations around them, some of which were of the most abominable description, were but too likely to captivate a sensual and unintellectual people: the bloody sacrifices of Moloch had to them a dark and fearful interest, which none can appreciate but those who have deeply studied the spirit of ancient times, and even they cannot fully do so. That they did not renounce their belief in Jehovah, when they adopted the impurities of Baal Peor and the sanguinary rites of other idols, is evidenced by the whole course of Scripture history; and it is pointed at in the first commandment, for the words are not, “Thou shalt have none other gods *but* me,” but “Thou shalt have none other gods *before* me;”—they were like the so-called

Christian of the present day, who is yet in “the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity.” They knew well that God was the Lord, but their hearts and lives said, “We will serve Satan a little longer, till we have gratified the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life—till we have complied with the fashion of the age, and gained ourselves a reputation among those who have power and influence, and who know not the Lord; and then we will return to the Lord, and renounce our idolatry.” This was the spirit against which God directed this law, and this was the spirit which prevailed, to a frightful extent, among his people of old. The same spirit, alas! prevails now; and the command, therefore, regards us, as well as them.

We have endeavoured thus briefly to show the state of mind in which the Jewish people were, and the causes, or rather incitements, of their idolatry. We shall now proceed to remark, in the second place, that it concerns us also—that, however pure we may think ourselves, we are yet, many of us, even grosser idolators than those who bowed down before Baal and Ashtaroth. Now there are two ways in which we do this—the one is, when we set our affections on things below, and make them our gods. What is the god of the epicure? What is the god of the voluptuary? Do they ever think at all on Him who made them? Are their minds ever employed in meditating on the justice and severity of God? In short, do they serve him? for, as our Saviour has told us, “his servants ye are to whom ye obey;” and the word which is translated *worship* signifies also *to serve*. Pleasure is the god they worship, and this fascinating idol is enshrined in the heart that ought to be a pure and holy temple for the good Spirit of God.

There is another way in which we may have another god before the Lord, and we mention it because, though always joined with that deification of the world which we have been just noticing, is yet so often inculcated, in these times, under the name of Philosophy, that it deserves a separate and serious consideration. It is when, rejecting the pictures of the Divinity as we find them in his own word, we choose to represent him as such an one as ourselves. We often hear it said, that God is merciful, and will

not punish those sins to which we are constitutionally inclined—that he has made us as we are, and will overlook our failings. We may make unto ourselves a God of this nature if we please—one who is all mercy and benevolence, and in whom there is no severity, no justice, no wrath ; and we may make out a pleasing system of religion, by which the righteous shall be saved in virtue of their righteousness, and the wicked in virtue of his ignorance—the well-informed, because he had no inclination to perform, and the ill-informed, because he had no inclination to learn, the will of God. But when we have made up this amiable scheme—when we have constructed this graceful edifice, the foundation of it is on the sand, and the winds shall come and blow, and the storm shall arise, and the waves swell and beat upon it, and it shall fall.

There are some, who, being benevolent themselves, and possessed of much taste and sensibility, feel very vividly the beautiful manifestations of God's goodness in his works and in his word, and they are too apt to take this, which is merely an intellectual quality, only a quick perception of the splendid and the true, for religion. Now this is generally accompanied with a considerable neglect of the principles laid down in that book which the individual himself so much admires. He takes a part of the divine word, and compares it with the divine works ; and, finding this well suited to his own feelings, he searches no further, and what is more, he refuses to be further informed ; he frames a character of the Deity from what he permits himself to know, and then bows down before a glorious personification of power and beauty, of mercy, and love, and wisdom. But where is the truth of the picture ? All the more terrible attributes are wanting. There is no hatred of sin, no vengeance, no wrath, no justice. It is like the picture of an eternal summer—a perpetual sunshine, diversified by no hail-storms, no thunderbolts, no whirlwinds. Heathenism, it is true, had no god so glorious ; but Christianity has not a God so inactive. “ For our God is a consuming fire,” says the word of inspiration ; and of himself he says, “ For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.” The judgment, with its fearful

array of saints and angels, the great white throne, and the assembly of the dead, small and great, out of every people, and nation, and language, and tongue, to stand before God—the books of life and of death—the sentence of exclusion from God's presence, and of confinement in that place prepared for the devil and his angels—have no place in the theory of these benevolent dreamers. Hell, with its ineffable horrors, is a mere tale in their minds ; and God, by their vain device, is robbed of half his power and all his terror.

These persons, then, are as much idolators as those who bow the knee before the loathsome image of Baal Peor. Their god is a nobler object of adoration ; but he is not the God who made heaven and earth. How often do we see those, who have done all but the “one thing needful”—who have won our hearts by their affectionate conduct, their amiable tempers—who are kind, and interesting, and cultivated, but who, though blameless in all the moral and social relations, have not believed with the heart unto righteousness ! To these we would say, not, with the theorists we speak of, “God is too merciful to condemn you ;” but, in our Lord's words, “yet lackest thou one thing ;” and we would add to this, “Repent, and believe the Gospel.”

The spirit of the age in which Moses and Joshua lived was the same as the spirit of our own. Then it manifested its enmity to God in idolatry. God had declared his existence and his power, and the world worshipped gods of wood and stone. He had declared his love of righteousness and purity, and the world worshipped their idols with foul and cruel rites. But the worship of the Jews did some little good, even to the Gentiles ; and the coming of Christianity entirely altered the aspect of society. In a world thus ameliorated, Satan had so far lost ground, that the rites of Moloch and Ashtaroth would no longer be tolerated ; and, as knowledge advanced, mankind perceived the absurdity of idol worship, and called themselves Christians : but though the face of society was thus changed, the hearts of individuals remained unaltered ; and though the conduct of the nominal Christian was less ridiculous, his feelings were as unhallowed as those of the professed heathen ; and therefore was it that the devil had to bring some new engine to bear upon the world, so as to make

his profit of man's evil heart, as before. Seizing, with the skill of an archangel and the malignity of a demon, the advantage which the altered times presented him, he puffed men up in their minds ; he taught them that they were able to sit in judgment on God's doings—that their powers were a standard by which they were to try divine truth—that nothing was beyond the grasp of their reason—that whatever they could not understand, must of necessity be false : and thus he, in some measure, blasted the fruits of the Gospel ; he drew many souls to perdition, and infidelity took the place of idolatry. We shall, on another occasion, search into the effects of this philosophy, falsely so called ; but now we will merely ask, whether is deserving of greater condemnation—the Jew, who, knowing the existence of Jehovah, chooses to worship Baal ; or the so-styled Christian, who, being more enlightened, chooses to worship nothing at all ?

There was one occasion in which our Lord epitomized the whole law in two short sentences : “A certain lawyer came and said unto him, Master, which is the first and great commandment of the law ? And he answered and said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy might, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength : this is the first commandment.” This, therefore, enjoins on us an entire devotion to God of all we have and all we are ; it commands us not to think our own thoughts, or to speak our own words : it requires that in all our thoughts, words, and works, begun, continued, and ended in him, we should have a single eye to his glory. Now this is our reasonable service, because He who made us, has an undoubted right to all our powers ; because to seek his glory, is to seek our own interest, both here and hereafter ; and because by devotion to him alone can we be made fit for his eternal kingdom. Heaven would be no heaven to us, unless we had accustomed ourselves to those exercises which will make the joys of heaven. The contemplation of God's perfections—the offering of praise to him, would be but a poor happiness to one whose god had been his belly, whose glory had been his shame. An eternal Sabbath would be but a melancholy occupation to one who found his earthly Sabbath a dull

weight on his hands, and who was anxious for the next day, that he might openly mix in the bustle of that world which had been the object of *his* thoughts in the house of God.

Lastly, we must notice the inducement held out at the close of the second commandment : “ For I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of them that hate me, and show mercy unto thousands on them that love me and keep my commandments.” There is a little difficulty in the first clause of this passage, because God said, by the mouth of an inspired prophet, “ And this people shall no longer say, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge ; but he who eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.” Now these two passages, with many more that may be adduced, do not declare contrary things, but refer to different cases—the one refers to nations and churches, the other to individuals ; and though no man shall be punished by God for the faults of his father, yet it has been often seen, in the history of God’s dealings with the world and with the Church, that, when a generation of men have grievously rebelled against him, he hath withdrawn his favour from that nation or that Church, and it has sometimes never been restored. Let us hear what the Spirit saith to the Church at Ephesus : “ Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first works ; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of his place ;” and this threat was fulfilled on the Churches of Ephesus, and Sardis, and Pergamos, and Thyatira, and Laodicea ; their candlestick was removed, and from that time Christianity was never more preached among them. Let us take an instance of later times. America, with its immense wealth, and India, with its gold, and gems, and silks, and costly drugs, were given up to the people of Spain and Portugal ; and, instead of bringing those nations to the knowledge of God, and governing them as in the sight of the Supreme Being, they were more negligent, more cruel than the heathens before the coming of Christ. And what has been the consequence ? Those countries have been deprived, successively, of all their colonies, their fleets, their armies, their power, their influence, their

wealth, and their internal tranquillity. Abject, and distracted, and misgoverned, it is to be feared that they do not yet see the hand of God in all this—that, in fact, the measure of their cup is not yet full. This is treating the subject in a way in which we are aware it is not usual to treat it: we should be told of all the causes that have brought those countries into such distresses; but we have no hesitation in declaring that it is the finger of God, and that he is visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation. How, then, are we to avoid bringing upon our Church and our country the wrath of God? The answer is very simple. By prizes and improving the opportunities that we have; by reading and meditating on his oracles; by attending, and encouraging, and supporting the means of grace; by lifting up our voices against those who would corrupt the one and deprive us of the other; by reproving, as far as in us lies, all false doctrine, heresy, and schism; and by prayer to Him, in whose hand are the hearts of all, on behalf of our Sovereign, our Church, and our Nation.

C.

SION COLLEGE,
January 10, 1842.

PRAYER.*

BY HUGH LATIMER, B.D., SOMETIME LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

I HAVE entered of late into the way of preaching, and spoken many things of prayer, and rather of prayer than of any other thing: for I think there is nothing more necessary to be spoken of, nor more abused than prayer was by the craft and subtlety of the devil; for many things were taken for prayer when they were nothing less. Therefore now also I have thought it good to entreat of prayer, to the intent that it may be known how precious a thing right prayer is. I told you, first, what prayer is; secondly, to whom we ought to pray; thirdly, where and in what place we ought to pray; and, fourthly, I told you the diversity of prayer, namely, of the common prayer and the private. These and such like things I have dilated and expounded unto you in the open pulpit.

Now at this present time I intend, as by the way of a lecture, at the request of my most gracious lady,† to expound unto you, her household servants, and others that be willing to hear, the right understanding and meaning of this most perfect prayer, which our Saviour himself taught us, at the request of his disciples, which prayer we call the *Pater noster*. This prayer of our Lord may be called a prayer above all prayers, the principal and most perfect prayer; which prayer ought to be regarded above all others, considering that our Saviour himself is the author of it: he was the maker of this prayer, being very God and very man. He taught us this prayer, which is a most perfect school-master, and commanded us to say it; which prayer containeth great and wonderful things, if a learned man had the handling of it. But as for me, such things as I have conceived by the reading of learned men's books, so far forth as God will give me his grace and Spirit, I will show unto you, touching the very meaning of it, and what is to be understood by every word contained in this prayer: for there is no word idle, or spoken in vain. For it must needs be perfect, good, and of great importance, being our Saviour's teaching, which is the wisdom of God itself. There be many other psalms and prayers in Scripture very good and godly, and it is good to know them; but it is with this prayer (the Lord's prayer I say) like as with the law

* From Sermons made upon the Lord's prayer.

† This sermon was preached before the household of Lady Catherine, Duchess of Suffolk.

of love. All the laws of Moses, as concerning what is to be done to please God, how to walk before him uprightly and godly—all such laws are contained in this law of love, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might, and thy neighbour as thyself:”* even so is it with this prayer. For like as the law of love is the sum and abridgment of the other laws, so this prayer is the sum and abridgment of all other prayers: all the other prayers are contained in this prayer; yea, whatsoever mankind hath need of to soul and body, that same is contained in this prayer.

This prayer hath two parts: first, it bath a preface, which some call a salutation, or a loving entrance; secondly, the prayer itself. The entrance is this: when ye pray, say, “Our Father, which art in heaven;”† as who say you Christian people, you that bear the name of Christians, you must pray so. Before I go any farther I must put you in remembrance to consider how much we be bound to our Saviour Christ, that he would vouchsafe to teach us to pray, and in this prayer to signify unto us the good will which our heavenly Father beareth towards us. Now to the matter.

“Our Father.” These words pertain not to the petition; they be but an entering, a seeking favour at God’s hand: yet, if we well weigh and consider them, they admonish us of many things, and strengthen our faith wondrous well. For this word “Father” signifieth that we be Christ’s brothers, and that God is our Father. He is the eldest Son, he is the Son of God by nature: we be his sons by adoption through his goodness; therefore he biddeth us to call him our Father, which is to be had in fresh memory and great reputation. For here we are admonished how that we be reconciled unto God—we which before-times were his enemies, are made now the children of God, and inheritors of everlasting life. This we be admonished by this word “Father.” So that it is a word of much importance and great reputation; for it confirmeth our faith when we call him Father. Therefore our Saviour, when he teacheth us to call God Father, teacheth us to understand the fatherly affection which God beareth towards us; which thing maketh us bold and hearty to call upon him, knowing that he beareth a good will towards us, and that he will surely hear our prayers. When we be in trouble we doubt of a stranger whether he will help us or not; but our Saviour, commanding us to call God Father, teacheth us to be assured of the love and good will of God

* “Diliges Dominum Deum tuum ex toto corde tuo, et in tota anima tua, et in tota mente tua, et proximum sicut te ipsum.”

† “Cum oratis dicite Pater noster, qui es in cœlis.”

towards us. So by this word “Father” we learn to establish and to comfort our faith, knowing most assuredly that he will be good unto us. For Christ was a perfect schoolmaster; he lacked no wisdom; he knew his Father’s will and pleasure; he teacheth us, yea, and most certainly assureth us, that God will be no cruel judge, but a loving Father. Here we see what commodities we have in this word “Father.” Seeing now that we find such commodities by this one word, we ought to consider the whole prayer with great diligence and earnest mind. For there is no word nor letter contained in this prayer but it is of great importance and weight; therefore it is necessary for us to know and to understand it thoroughly, and then to speak it considerately with great devotion: else it is to no purpose to speak the words without understanding—it is but lip-labour and vain babbling, and so unworthy to be called prayer, as it was in times past used in England. Therefore, when you say this prayer, you must well consider what you say. For it is better once said deliberately with understanding, than a thousand times without understanding, which is in very deed but vain babbling; and so more a displeasure than pleasure unto God: for the matter lieth not in much saying, but in well saying. So if it be said to the honour of God, then it hath its effect, and we shall have our petitions: for God is true in his promises; and our Saviour knowing him to be well affected towards us, commandeth us, therefore, to call him Father.

Here you must understand, that like as our Saviour was most earnest and fervent in teaching us how to pray and call upon God for aid and help, and for things necessary both to our souls and bodies; so the devil, that old serpent, with no less diligence, endeavoureth himself to let and stop our prayers, so that we shall not call upon God. And, amongst other his lets, he hath one especially, wherewith he thinketh to keep us from prayer, which is the remembrance of our sins. When he perceiveth us to be disposed to pray, he cometh with his craft and subtle conveyances, saying, “What, wilt thou pray unto God for aid and help? Knowest thou not that thou art a wicked sinner, and a transgressor of the law of God? Look rather to be damned and judged for thy ill doings, than to receive any benefit at his hands! Wilt thou call him Father, which is so holy a God, and thou art so wicked and miserable a sinner?” This the devil will say, and trouble our minds to stop and let us from our prayer, and so to give us occasion not to pray unto God. In this temptation we must seek for some remedy and comfort; for the devil doth put us in remembrance of our sins to that end, to keep us from prayer and invocation of God. The remedy for this tempta-

tion is to call our Saviour to remembrance, who hath taught us to say this prayer; he knew his Father's pleasure—he knew what he did. When he commanded us to call God our Father, he knew we should find fatherly affections in God towards us. Call this, I say, to remembrance, and again remember that our Saviour hath cleansed, through his passion, all our sins, and taken away all our wickedness, so that as many as believe in him shall be the children of God. In such wise let us strive and fight against the temptations of the devil, which would not have us to call upon God, because we be sinners. Catch thou hold of our Saviour, believe in him, be assured in thy heart that he, with his suffering, took away all thy sins. Consider again, that our Saviour calleth us to prayer, and commandeth us to pray. Our sins let us and withdraw us from prayer, but our Saviour maketh them nothing: when we believe in him, it is like as if we had no sins. For he changeth with us, he taketh our sins and wickedness from us, and giveth unto us his holiness, righteousness, justice, fulfilling of the law, and so, consequently, everlasting life: so that we be like as if we had done no sin at all; for his righteousness standeth us in so good stead, as though we of our own selves had fulfilled the law to the uttermost.

Therefore our sins cannot let us, nor withdraw us from prayer; for they be gone, they are no sins, they cannot be hurtful unto us. Christ dying for us, as all the Scripture both of the New and Old Testament witnesseth, “He hath taken away our sorrows.”* Like as when I owe unto a man an hundred pounds, the day is expired, he will have his money: I have it not, and for lack of it I am laid in prison; in such distress cometh a good friend, and saith, “Sir, be of good cheer, I will pay thy debts;” and forthwith payeth the whole sum, and setteth me at liberty. Such a friend is our Saviour; he hath paid our debts, and set us at liberty, else we should have been damned, world without end, in everlasting prison and darkness. Therefore, though our sins condemn us, yet when we allege Christ, and believe in him, our sins shall not hurt us. For St. John saith, “We have an Advocate with God the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”† Mark that he saith, “advocatum, non advocatos;” he speaketh singularly, not plurally. We have one Advocate, not many: neither saints, nor any body else, but only him; and none other, neither by the way of mediation, nor by the way of redemption. He only is sufficient, for he only is all the doer; let him have

* “Dolores nostros ipse portavit.”

† “Si quis peccaverit advocatum habemus apud Patrem, Jesum Christum justum.”

all the whole praise. Let us not withdraw from him his majesty, and give it to creatures; for he only satisfieth for the sins of the whole world. So that all that believe in Christ be clean from all the filthiness of their sins. For St. John Baptist saith, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.”* Doth the devil call thee from prayer? Christ calleth thee unto it again. For so it is written, “To that end the Son of God appeared to destroy the works of the devil.”†

But mark here, Scripture speaketh not of impenitent sinners; Christ suffered not for them; his death remedieith not their sins: for they be the bondmen of the devil, and his slaves, and therefore Christ’s benefits pertain not unto them. It is a wonderful saying that St John hath: “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.” The devil saith unto me, “Thou art a sinner.” “Yea (saith St. John), but the Lamb of God hath taken away thy sins.” Also, “We, therefore, having a great high priest which hath passed through the heavens, even Jesus, the Son of God, let us with boldness go unto the seat of his grace, that we may obtain mercy.”‡ Oh it is a comfortable thing that we have an access unto God. Isaiah saith, “The pain of our punishment was laid upon him, and with his stripes are we healed.”§ Further, in the New Testament we read, “Unto the same bear all the prophets witness, that all they do receive forgiveness of sins by his name, which believe on him.”|| Now you see how you be remedied from your sins; you hear how you shall withstand the devil when he will withdraw you from prayer. Let us, therefore, not give over prayer, but stick unto it; let us rather believe Christ our Saviour than the devil, which was a liar at the beginning. You know now how you may prevent him, how you may put him off, and avoid his temptations.

There is one other addition before we come to the petitions, which doth much confirm our faith, and increase the same—“which art in heaven.”¶ These words put a diversity between the heavenly Father and our temporal fathers. There be some temporal fathers which would fain help their children, but they

* “Ecce agnus Dei, qui tollit peccata mundi.”

† “In hoc apparuit Filius Dei ut destruat opera diaboli.”

‡ “Habentes igitur pontificem magnum, qui penetravit cœlos, Jesum, Filium Dei, accedamus cum fiducia, ad thronum gratiae ut consequamur misericordiam.”

§ “In livore ejus sanati sunus.”

|| “Huic omnes prophetæ testimonium perhibent, remissionem peccatorum accipere per nomen ejus omnes qui eridunt in eum.”

¶ “Qui es in cœlis.”

cannot, they be not able to help them. Again, there be some fathers which are rich, and might help their children, but they be so unnatural they will not help them. But our heavenly Father, in that we call him Father, we learn that he will help, that he beareth a fatherly love towards us. “In heaven :” here we learn that he is able to help us, to give us all good things necessary to soul and body, and is mighty to defend us from all ill and peril. So it appeareth that he is a Father which will help, and that he, being celestial, is able to help us. Therefore we may have a boldness and confidence that he may help us, and that he will help us, where and whensoever we call.

He saith, “I fill heaven and earth :”* and again, “Heaven is my seat, and the earth is my footstool :”† where we see that he is a mighty God, that he is in heaven and earth with his power and might. In heaven he is apparently, where face to face he sheweth himself unto his angels and saints. In earth he is not so apparently, but darkly and obscurely he exhibiteth himself unto us ; for our corrupt and feeble flesh could not bear his majesty. Yet he filleth the earth—that is to say, he ruleth and governeth the same—ordering all things according unto his will and pleasure. Therefore we must learn to persuade ourselves, and undoubtedly believe, that he is able to help, and that he beareth so good and fatherly a will towards us, that he will not forget us. Therefore, the king and prophet David saith, “The Lord looked down from heaven.”‡ As far as the earth is from heaven, yet God looketh down—he seeth all things, he is in every corner. He saith the Lord hath looked down, not the saints. No, he saith not so ; for the saints have not so sharp eyes to see down from heaven ; they be spur blind and sand blind ; they cannot see so far, nor have so long ears to hear. And therefore our petition and prayer should be unto Him which will hear and can hear ; for it is the Lord that looketh down. He is here on earth, as I told you, very darkly ; but he is in heaven most manifestly, where he sheweth himself unto his angels and saints face to face. We read in Scripture that Abel’s blood did cry unto God ; where it appeareth that he can hear ; yea, not only hear, but also see and feel : for he seeth over all things, so that the least thought of our hearts is not hid from him. Therefore ponder and consider these words well, for they fortify our faith. We call him Father to put ourselves in remembrance of his good will towards us. Heavenly we call

* “Cœlum et terram imleo.”

† “Cœlum mihi sedes est, et terra scabellum pedum meorum.”

‡ “Dominus de cœlo prospexit.”

him, signifying his might and power, that he may help and do all things according to his will and pleasure. So it appeareth most manifestly, that there lacketh neither good will nor power in him. There was once a prophet, which, when he was ill entreated of king Joash, said, “The Lord look upon it and revenge it.”* There be many men in England, and other where else, which care not for God ; yea, they be clean without God, which say in their hearts, “Tush, the clouds cover him, that he may not see, and he dwelleth above in heaven.”† But, as I told you before, Abel’s blood may certify us of his present knowledge. Let us, therefore, take heed that we do nothing that might displease his Majesty, neither openly nor secretly ; for he is everywhere, and nothing can be hid from him : “He seeth it, and will punish it.”‡

Further, this word “Father,” is not only apt and convenient for us to strengthen our faith withal (as I told you), but also it moveth God the sooner to hear us when we call him by that name Father ; for he, perceiving our confidence in him, cannot choose but show him like a father. So that this word “Father” is most meet to move God to pity, and to grant our requests. Certain it is, and proved by holy Scripture, that God hath a fatherly and loving affection towards us, far passing the love of bodily parents to their children : yea, as far as heaven and earth is asunder, so far his love towards mankind exceedeth the love of natural parents to their children ; which love is set out by the mouth of his holy prophet Isaiah, where he saith, “Can a wife forget the child of her womb, and the son whom she had borne ? And though she do forget him, yet will not I forget thee.”§ Here are showed the affections and unspeakable love which God beareth towards us. He saith, “May aw oman ?”|| He speaketh of the woman, meaning the man too ; but because women most commonly are more affected towards their children than men be, therefore he nameth the woman. And it is a very unnatural woman that hateth her child, or neglecteth the same. But, O Lord, what crafts and conveyances useth the devil abroad, that he can bring his matters so to pass, that some women set aside not only all motherly affections, but also all natural humanity, insomuch that they kill their own children, their own blood and flesh !

* “Dominus videat et requirat.”

† “Nubes latibulum ejus, nec nostra considerat, et circa cardines cœli ambulat.” ‡ “Videt et requiret.”

§ “Num oblivioni tradet mulier infantem suum, quo minus miscreatur filium uteri sui ? Sic esto obliviscatur ille, ego tamen tui non obliviscar.”

|| “Nunquid potest mulier ?”

Here I have occasion to tell you a story which happened at Cambridge. Master Bilney (or rather St. Bilney, that suffered death for God's word's sake)—the same Bilney was the instrument whereby God called me to knowledge; for I may thank him, next to God, for that knowledge that I have in the word of God. For I was as obstinate a Papist as any was in England, insomuch that, when I should be made Bachelor of Divinity, my whole oration went against Philip Melancthon, and against his opinions. Bilney heard me at that time, and perceived that I was zealous, without knowledge, and he came to me afterwards in my study, and desired me, for God's sake, to hear his confession. I did so; and, to say the truth, by his confession, I learned more than before in many years. So, from that time forward, I began to smell the word of God, and forsake the school doctors and such fooleries.

Now, after I had been acquainted with him, I went with him to visit the prisoners in the tower at Cambridge, for he was ever visiting prisoners and sick folk. So we went together, and exhorted them as well as we were able to do, moving them to patience, and to acknowledge their faults. Among other prisoners, there was a woman which was accused that she had killed her child, which act she plainly and steadfastly denied, and could not be brought to confess the act, which denying gave us occasion to search for the matter; and so we did, and at length we found that her husband loved her not, and therefore he sought means to make her out of the way. The matter was thus:—

A child of hers had been sick by the space of a year, and so decayed, as it were, in a consumption. At length it died, in harvest time. She went to her neighbours and other friends to desire their help to prepare the child to the burial, but there was nobody at home, every man was in the field. The woman, in a heaviness and trouble of spirit, went, and, being herself alone, prepared the child to burial. Her husband coming home, not having great love towards her, accused her of the murder and so she was taken and brought to Cambridge. But as far forth as I could learn, through earnest inquisition, I thought in my conscience the woman was not guilty, all the circumstances well considered. Immediately after this I was called to preach before the king, which was my first sermon that I made before his majesty, and it was done at Windsor, where his majesty, after the sermon was done, did most familiarly talk with me in a gallery. Now, when I saw my time, I kneeled down before his majesty, opening the whole matter, and afterwards most humbly desired his majesty to pardon that woman; for I thought in my conscience she was not guilty, else I would not, for all the world, sue for a

murderer. The king most graciously heard my humble request, insomuch that I had a pardon ready for her at my return home-ward. In the mean season that same woman was delivered of a child in the tower at Cambridge, whose godfather I was, and Mrs. Cheeke was godmother. But all that time I hid my pardon, and told her nothing of it, only exhorting her to confess the truth. At the length the time came when she looked to suffer. I came, as I was wont to do, to instruct her ; she made great moan to me, and most earnestly required me that I would find the means that she might be purified before her suffering : for she thought she should have been damned, if she shoud suffer without purification. Nevertheless, women be as well in the favour of God before they be purified as after. So we travailed with this woman till we brought her to a good trade, and at length shewed her the king's pardon, and let her go.

This tale I told you by this occasion, that though some women be very unnatural, and forget their children, yet, when we hear any body so report, we should not be too hasty in believing the tale, but rather suspend our judgments till they know the truth.

And, again, we shall mark here by the great love and loving-kindness of God, our loving Father, who sheweth himself so loving unto us, that, notwithstanding women forget sometimes their own natural children, yet he will not forget us ; he will hear us when we call upon him, as he saith by the evangelist Matthew, “ Ask, and it shall be given unto you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you,” &c. Then he cometh and bringeth in a pretty similitude, saying, “ Is there any man amongst you, which, if his son ask bread, will offer him a stone ? ” “ If ye then, being evil,* can give your children good gifts,” &c. In these words, where he saith, “ which be evil,”† he giveth us our own proper name, he painteth us out, he pincheth us, he cutteth off our combs, he plucketh down our stomachs. And here we learn to acknowledge ourselves to be wicked, and to know him to be the well-spring and fountain of all goodness, and that all good things come of him. Therefore let every man think lowly of himself, humble himself, and call upon God, which is ready to give us, not only bread and drink, or other necessaries, but the Holy Ghost. To whom will he give the Holy Ghost ? To lords and ladies ? To gentlemen or gentle-women ? No, not so : he is not ruled by affections—he hath not respect unto personages. “ Poscentibus” saith he ; unto those which call upon him, being rich or poor, lords or knights, beggars or rich he is ready to give unto them when they come

* “ Cum sitis mali.”

† “ Cum sitis mali.”

to him. And this is a great comfort unto those which be poor and miserable in this world ; for they may be assured of the help of God—yea, and as boldly go unto him, and desire his help, as the greatest king in earth. But we must ask, we must enquire for it. He would have us to be importunate, to be earnest and diligent in desiring ; then we shall receive, when we come with a good faith and confidence. To whom shall we call ? Not unto the saints. “ Poscentibus illum,” saith he ; those that call upon him shall be heard ; therefore we ought to come to him only, and not unto his saints.

But one word is left which we must needs consider—*Noster*, “ our.” He saith not “ my,” but “ our.” Wherefore saith he “ our ?” This word “ our” teacheth us to consider, that the Father of heaven is a common Father ; as well my neighbour’s Father as mine—as well the poor man’s Father as the rich. So that he is not a peculiar Father, but a Father to the whole Church and congregation—to all the faithful, be they never so poor, so vile, so foul, and despised ; yet he is their Father as well as mine ; and therefore I should not despise them, but consider that God is their Father as well as mine.

Here may we perceive what communion is between us, so that when I pray, I pray not for myself alone, but for all the rest. Again, when they pray, they pray not for themselves only, but for me ; for Christ hath so framed this prayer, that I must needs include my neighbour in it. Therefore, all those which pray this prayer, they pray as well for me as for themselves, which is a great comfort to every faithful heart, when he considereth that all the Church prayeth for him ; for, among such a great number, there be some which be good, and whose prayer God will hear. As it appeared by Abraham’s prayer, which prayer was so effectual, that God would have pardoned Sodom and Gomorrah, if he might have found but ten good persons therein. Likewise St. Paul, in shipwreck, preserved his company by his prayer. So that it is a great comfort unto us to know, that all good and faithful persons pray for us. There be some learned men which gether out of Scripture, that the prayer of St. Stephen was the occasion of the conversion of St. Paul. St. Chrysostom saith, that that prayer that I make for myself is the best, and is of more efficacy than that which is made in common. Which saying I like not very well ; for our Saviour was better learned than St. Chrysostom—he taught us to pray in common for all. Therefore we ought to follow him, and to be glad to pray one for another. For we have a common saying amongst us : “ Whosoever loveth me, loveth my hound.” So whosoever loveth God, will love his neighbour, which is made after the image of God.

And here is to be noted, that prayer hath one property before all other good works ; for with my alms I help but one or two at once, but with my faithful prayer I help all. I desire God to comfort all men living, but specially “ those which be of the household of God.”* Yet we ought to pray with all our hearts for the other which believe not, that God will turn their hearts and renew them with his Spirit ; yea, our prayer reacheth so far that our very capital enemy ought not to be omitted. Here you see what an excellent thing prayer is, when it proceedeth from a faithful heart. It doth far pass all the good works that men can do.

Now to make an end. We are monished here of charity, and taught that God is not only a private Father, but a common Father unto the whole world, unto all the faithful ; be they never so poor and miserable in this world, yet he is their Father. Where we may learn humility and lowliness ; specially great and rich men shall learn here not to be lofty, or to despise the poor. For when ye despise the poor miserable man, whom despise ye ? You despise him which called God his Father, as well as you ; and, peradventure, more acceptable and more regarded in his sight than you be. Those proud persons may learn here to leave their stubbornness and loftiness. But there be a great many which little regard this ; they think themselves better than other men be, and so despise and contemn the poor, insomuch that they will not hear poor men’s causes, nor defend them from wrong and oppression of the rich and mighty. Such proud men despise the Lord’s prayer ; they should be as careful for their brethren as for themselves. And such humility, such love and carefulness towards our neighbours, we learn by this word “ our.” Therefore I desire you, on God’s behalf, let us cast away all disdainfulness, all proudness—yea, and all bubble-babble. Let us pray this prayer with understanding and great deliberation, not following the trade of monkery, which was without all devotion and understanding. There be but few which can say from the bottom of their hearts, “ Our Father”—a little number. Neither the Turks, neither the Jews, nor yet the impenitent sinners, can call God their Father. Therefore it is but vain babbling, whatsoever they pray ; God heareth them not—he will not receive their prayers. The promise of hearing is made unto them only which be faithful and believe in God ; which endeavour themselves to live according to his commandments. For Scripture saith, “ The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers.”† But who

* *Domesticos fidei.*

† *Oculi Domini super justos.*

are these righteous? Every penitent sinner that is sorry, from the bottom of his heart, for his wickedness, and believeth that God will forgive him his sins, for his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. This is called in Scripture a just man, that endeavoureth himself to leave all wickedness. In such sort Peter and Paul were just, because they did repent and believed in Christ, and so endeavoured themselves to live according unto God's laws. Therefore, like as they were made just before God, so may we too, for we have even the self-same promise. Let us, therefore, follow their example. Let us forsake all sin and wickedness; then God will hear our prayers. For Scripture saith, "The Lord fulfilleth the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry and help them."* In another place he saith, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask what ye will, and it shall be done for you."† So we say that the promises pertain only to the faithful, to those which endeavour themselves to live according to God's will and pleasure, which can be content to leave their wickedness and follow godliness; those God will hear at all times, whensoever they shall call upon him.

Remember now what I have said—remember what is meant by this word "our;" namely, that it admonisheth us of love and charity; it teacheth us to beware of stubbornness and proudness, considering that God loveth as well the beggar as the rich man; for he regardeth no persons. Again, what is to be understood by this word "Father;" namely, that he beareth a good will towards us, that he is ready and willing to help us. "Heavenly;" that admonisheth us of his potency and ability, that he is ruler over all things. This, I say, remember, and follow it; then we shall receive all things necessary for this life, and, finally, everlasting joy and felicity. Amen.

* "Dominus facit quicquid volunt timentes eum, et clamorem eorum exaudit ac servat eos."

† "Si manseritis in sermone meo, et verba mea custodiveritis quicquid volueritis petentes accipietis."

THE NATURE OF FAITH.

BY THE REV ISAAC BARROW, D.D., MASTER TRIN. COLL., CAMBRIDGE.

2 PETER i. 1.

To them that have obtained like precious faith with us.

THE holy Scripture recommendeth faith—that is, a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our religion, from divine revelation, taught by our Lord and his apostles, as a most precious and honourable practice—as a virtue of the first magnitude, very commendable in itself, very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us—having most excellent fruits growing from it, most noble privileges annexed to it, most ample rewards assigned for it.

It is in a special manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime instance of piety, “This is His commandment, that we should believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”

It is the root of our spiritual life; for “he that cometh to God must believe;” and “add to your faith virtue,” saith St. Peter, supposing faith to precede other virtues.

It is the principal conduit of divine grace; for—

By it we are regenerated and become the sons of God: “Ye all (saith St. Paul) are the sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus.”

By it “we abide in God,” and do possess him, saith St. John.

By it “Christ dwelleth in us,” saith St Paul.

By it we obtain God’s Spirit: “Did ye (saith St. Paul) receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

By it we are justified, or acquitted from guilt and condemnation for sin; for, “being justified by faith, we have peace with God.”

By it “our hearts are purged,” saith St. Paul; “our souls are purified,” saith St. Peter.

By it we are freed from the dominion of sin; according to that of our Saviour: “If ye abide in my word ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.”

It procureth freedom of access to God: “We have (saith St. Paul) boldness and access, with confidence, by the faith of Him.”

It is the shield whereby we resist temptations, and the weapon whereby we overcome the world.

In fine, it is that which, being retained in a good conscience, and maintained by virtuous practice, doth keep us in a state of salvation, and will assuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity; for “by grace we are saved, through faith.”

It hath also divers ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendering it commendable and acceptable to God.

As—

1. Faith implieth a good use of reason. This is that which commendeth any virtue, that a man acting after it doth act wisely, in conformity to the frame and design of his nature, or like a rational creature, using his best faculties in the best manner, and in their proper operations, toward the end intended by the all-wise Creator: this is that upon which all dispensation of justice is founded, a man being accountable for the use of his reason, so as to deserve reward for the right management, and punishment for the misuse, thereof: this is that, consequently, whereon God so often declareth himself to ground his judgment, so that in effect he will justify men for being wise, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence, in the holy style, wisdom and virtue, or piety, are terms equivalent, and a fool doth signify the same with a vicious or impious person. And if ever a man deserveth commendation for well using his reason, it is then, when, upon mature deliberation, he doth embrace the Christian doctrine; for so doing is a most rational act, arguing the person to be sagacious, considerate, and judicious—one who doth carefully enquire into things, doth seriously weigh the case, doth judge soundly about it.

It was a foul aspersion cast upon our religion by its ancient opposers, that it did require a mere belief, void of reason, challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man, indeed, justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms; but it is really a gross calumny, such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our religion, being repugnant to the nature and tenor thereof—being prejudicial to its interest and design—being contrary to its use and practice. Never any religion was, indeed, so little liable to the censure of obtruding itself on men’s credulity; none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea, provoked them, for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage), to a fair, discreet, careful examination

thereof. Other religions have, for their justification, insisted upon the examples of ancestors, custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsical, and of small validity in any case), declining all other test and verdict of reason: but our religion confideth in itself, and the pure merit of its cause; and, therefore, warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth, referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

It, indeed, ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and choosing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, until, after a competent time and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other, God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man of its truth who is not affectedly blind, or stupid, or wantonly slothful and careless, or forwardly stiff and obstinate.

What, indeed, better arguments—considering the nature of the objects, which faith respecteth, being things spiritual and invisible; considering also the capacities of persons concerned, being all sorts of people, wise and simple, learned and rude—could we have, or could we need, than the conspicuous excellency and usefulness of the doctrine, approving itself to the mind, and confirming itself by palpable experience of most happy fruits, springing from a practice conformable thereto; than its exact correspondence to manifold ancient presignifications and predictions concerning it; than special attestations of God thereto, not only by audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, but also by innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of Divine Providence, in strange methods, to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the blessings and consolations attending a faithful observance of it? What subtlety of discourse, what charm of eloquence, could serve to evince and impress the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands, and promises of God—concerning the immortal subsistence of our soul, the future judgment, the everlasting rewards hereafter, with such evidence and such force, to the common and vulgar reason, or, indeed, to any reason of man, as

do these plain arguments, needing no reach of wit, or depth of judgment, to sound their meaning or feel their strength ?

But if any man be too wise to be pleased with such downright and easy ways of conviction, reason itself, well followed, would lead him hither, and serve to produce faith in him : for that there is a God, reason, from observation of appearances in nature and Providence, will collect ; that goodness is one of his principal attributes, reason, from the same grounds, will infer ; that God hath an especial regard to men, will thence also become notorious ; that, consequently, God will vouchsafe his guidance to men in their way toward happiness, will appear reasonable to conceive ; that God hath not done this in any other way, reason, comparing and weighing things, will easily discern ; that Christian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reason soon will admit ; so hath reason led us to the door of faith, and, being arrived thither, will, if our will be not averse, easily find entrance.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoins us to use our best reason in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance : he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to shut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it ; but chargeth us to go into the clearest light, to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our best senses and sharpest attention, before we do yield our consent and approbation to it. His precepts are, that “ we examine all things, and hold fast that which is good ;” that “ we believe not every spirit (or revelation pretended), but try the spirits, whether they be of God ;” that we stand on our guard, and “ take heed that no man deceive us ;” that we “ be not fools,” nor “ children in understanding,” but wise and perfect men ; that we “ compare things different,” and “ try what is well pleasing to God ;” that we be “ always ready, with meekness and modesty, to render, unto every man demanding it, an account of the hope in us.”

He, therefore, doth expostulate with men for their dulness, their incogitancy, their sluggishness, their folly, as the causes of their unbelief, declaring that, in respect to such defaults, wilfully incurred, he will proceed to condemn it : “ He (saith our Lord) that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him ; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day ;” and, “ If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not ; if I had not come and spoken unto them, if I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin.” Our Lord, we see, did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground ; but he claimeth it as due upon two most rational accounts—his convincing discourses, and his unparalleled works, which, from any well-advised

and well-disposed person, could not but win belief that he was “a teacher sent from God.”

Indeed, if we seriously do weigh the case, we shall find, that to require faith without reason is to demand an impossibility; for faith is an effect of persuasion, and persuasion is nothing else but the application of some reason to the mind, apt to draw forth its assent. No man, therefore, can believe he knoweth not what or why; he that truly believeth must apprehend the proposition, and he must discern its connection with some principle of truth, which, as more notorious to him, he before doth admit; otherwise he doth only pretend to believe, out of some design, or from affection to some party; his faith is not so much really faith as hypocrisy, craft, fondness, or faction.

God, therefore, neither doth nor can enjoin us faith without reason, but therefore doth require it as matter of duty from us, because he hath furnished sufficient reason to persuade us; and having made his doctrine credible—“a faithful (or credible) word, and worthy of all acceptance”—having given us reason chiefly to be employed in such matters, as he justly may claim our assent, so he will take well our ready surrendery of it to him, as an act of reason and wisdom becoming us.

To yield unto reason, fairly proposed and proved, is, in any case, a laudable quality, signifying that a man hath his reason to purpose, that he is guided and governed thereby, not by humour or fancy; qualifying him for conversation and business, for which nothing rendereth a man more unfit than humorous incredulity, or obstinacy against reason. It is especially commendable in these cases, concerning our better part and final state, arguing a man to be sober and advised, affording regard to things best deserving it, employing his consideration in due place, being faithful and just to himself, in attending to his main concerns.

2. Faith implieth a compliance with the providence and grace of God—with his providence framing the economy of things to be believed, discovering it to the world by special revelation, furnishing motives apt to work faith, dispensing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto—with his grace operating in our souls, by illustration of our minds to discern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to relish and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man, to whom means are not administered, sufficient to produce in him that measure of faith which is requisite toward the good management of his life, and his rendering an account for it at God’s tribunal; there is no man also, to whom such means are afforded, whom the grace of God, who “desireth

that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth,” doth not in some degree excite to the due improvement of them; but in effect the case is varied, because some men do embrace those means and comply with that grace, while others do reject or neglect them.

Our Lord saith, that “every one who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him;” but some there are to whom the Father speaketh, yet they “stop their ears, and refuse to hear;” some do hear, in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction from their mind, being like those of whom the apostle saith “the word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those that heard it.”

“No man (saith our Lord again) can come unto me except the Father draw him;” but this attraction is not compulsory; we may hold back, we may withstand it, and not follow.

“Faith (saith St. Paul) is a gift of God,” and “a favour granted to us;—to you (saith he) it hath been gratuitously vouchsafed, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him;” and “to you (saith our Lord) it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.” But this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject or decline it.

Faith is “a fruit of God’s Spirit;” but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt prejudice, of vicious affection, of worldly care, which will not thrive without good care and culture.

God inviteth us to believe, by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and virtue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able, if we are not very stupid, to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt, if we are not very stubborn, to subdue us. “Behold (saith he), I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him.” Such is the case: God standeth at the door of our heart by the ministry of his word, he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear, is the work of our vigilance—to open, is an act of our voluntary compliance.

“God, (saith St. Paul) who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth; God shineth into us by illumination of his Spirit, the which, through the ear,

doth convey the light of truth into the heart ; but we may, by wilful obstruction, exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it ; we may there quench it by foul affections ; we may smother it in fogs of evil prejudice ; we may dissipate it by troublesome cares ; we may, by affected blindness, or drowsy negligence, render it indiscernible or ineffectual to us, like those of whom the apostle there saith, that “the God of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

A man may “thrust away the word,” as it is said of the Jews ; he may, as others of the same stamp did, “resist the Spirit ;” he may, as those worldlings in the Gospel, let the seed fall beside him, or not fall deep into him, or fall into thorns which may choke it ; he may hate the light, and therefore not come unto it, or rebel against it, as those did in Job ; he may, as the Pharisees did, defeat the counsels and cross the desires of God.

And as to deal thus with God’s word and providence, thus to treat his Spirit and grace, is heinously criminal, so to use them well is very acceptable to God’s goodness. If we yield due regard to his providence, and an obsequious ear to his word ; if we cheerfully do accept his gifts, and close with his overtures of mercy ; if we concur with his motions, and further his gracious designs—he will take it kindly of us, as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that wherein he most delighteth, which is the procurement of our good.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

God, our parent, hath stamped on our nature some lineaments of himself, whereby we resemble him ; he hath implanted in our souls some roots of piety toward him—into our frame he hath inserted some propensions to acknowledge him and to affect him ; the which are excited and improved by observing the manifest footsteps of divine power, wisdom, and goodness which occur in the works of nature and providence : to preserve and cherish these is very commendable, a man thereby keeping the precious relics of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining somewhat of its primitive worth and integrity ; declaring that, by ill usage, he hath not quite shattered or spoiled his best faculties and inclinations.

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himself, so as to have preserved in his soul those seeds of piety, apt to conspire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an assent to divers points, so thwarting our carnal sense and gust, that without a good esteem

of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them ; the carnal mind (or brutish part within us) being, as St. Paul saith, “enmity to God, and incapable of submission to his law ;” the “sensual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are foolishness to him.” To balance with repugnance and indisposition there must be some good notions and good affections in the mind, disposing it to comply with the revelation of truth and operation of grace.

There can hardly be any greater instance of respect and love toward any person, than a ready yielding of assent to his words when he doth aver things to our conceit absurd or incredible ; than resting on his promise when he seemeth to offer things impossible, or strangely difficult ; than embracing his advice when he recommendeth things very cross to our interest, humour, and pleasure : whence Abraham’s faith (expressed in hoping for a son in his decrepid age, and in offering up that son, who was so dear to him, who was the “heir of promise,” the prop of his family and hope) is so magnified, as an argument of exceeding respect and affection toward God : “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God ;” it was a great evidence of his friendship, that, “against hope, he believed in hope, being fully persuaded that what God had promised he was able to perform ;” and, therefore, it “was imputed to him for righteousness,” or accepted by God as a signal act of goodness, whereby he did testify his immovable opinion concerning the power, fidelity, and benignity of God, together with answerable good will toward him.

And many things doth the Christian doctrine propose apt to try such a friendship—many a hard saying doth it assert which a profane mind can hardly swallow or digest ; there is, indeed, scarce any article of faith at which we shall not boggle—any matter of duty which we shall not start at—any promise of God whereat we shall not stagger, if we be not seasoned with favourable apprehensions and inclinations toward him who recommendeth them to us, as endued with those attributes which secure their credibility.

That God Almighty should erect this stately fabric of heaven and earth, decked with so rich and goodly furniture, with especial regard to man, so puny and mean a creature, whom he foresaw so ready to offend and wrong him ; that upon this foul misdemeanor God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy than that whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his de-

served death a gate of immortality; that for the redemption of him (continuing in apostasy and rebellious enmity) God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the baseness and infirmity of our flesh—to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition—to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences; these are mysteries to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensely good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit, if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach and comprehension.

That Jesus, a man in appearance like to ourselves, of mean parentage, of poor estate, who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactor and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general Author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point which cannot but appear very strange, very scandalous, to minds not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God, who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon enormous transgressions against himself—that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards—who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, recollecting our scattered dust, and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's power, and that nothing is too hard for him to accomplish.

That to deny ourselves in all ways—to hate our own souls—to take up a cross—to forsake kindred and friends—to quit houses and lands—to renounce all that we have—to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world—to cut off our right hands—to pluck out our right eyes—to mortify our members and crucify our flesh—to be dead to the world—to expose our lives unto the greatest dangers—yea, to sacrifice them unto certain loss—are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such duties; most faithful, who hath engaged to satisfy us for the discharge of them; most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages which we sustain in such practice?

That the methods of Providence should be so intricate and

unaccountable—that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth—that He who disposeth all things should, to those whom he most liketh and loveth, dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow, permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth to live without interruption, in quiet, splendour, and jollity—would stumble one who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith, therefore, in most of its chief parts, doth imply him that owneth it to be well conceited and well affected toward his Maker, thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine. “He (saith our Lord) that hath received my testimony, hath set his seal that God is true;” that is, most evidently he doth signify his opinion of God’s veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good: “For be (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehension, yet God is true, who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good, who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely, in appearance, to find effect, yet God is faithful, and able to perform it.” And he that is thus disposed, in judgment and affection, toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him.

Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients or inseparable adjuncts which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions which concur in its production.

1. To the engendering of faith there is required a mind sober, composed, and wakeful, ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducible to our good and advantage—a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee or neglect the concerns of our better part and eternal state.

That we may believe, we must have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and a heart to understand; we must attentively look with our eyes, we must “incline our ears to God’s word,” we must “apply our heart to instruction.”

Thus, in the apostolical history, we may observe, that when the apostles, in a manner apt to stir any man, being awake, to remark, did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse, while others did not mind or regard it.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry: we must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded, as it is said of Lydia, that she did “attend to the words spoken by St. Paul;” and “we must

(saith the apostle to the Hebrews) yield extraordinary attention to the things heard ;” we must, as our Saviour warneth, let the evangelical “ word sink down into our ears ;” we must take the pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them, as the Beræans did, who did “ examine the Scriptures, whether those things were so,” as St. Paul did teach out of them. We must exert and demonstrate that studious care which is requisite to get a clear knowledge and firm persuasion concerning the points of belief; for “ he that received the seed into the good ground” was “ he that heard the word, and did understand it,” or well consider it. God, for this reason, doth lay his truth not so open or obvious that we may be somewhat exercised, and put to use a pious diligence in finding it; it lieth under the surface, that we may delve for it; “ searching the Scriptures,” weighing reasons, comparing things.

3. Faith must needs proceed from sincerity and soundness of judgment.

The assent which, upon contemplation and considering of things, we do yield to them, is usually termed judgment, and it much resembleth that act whose name it borroweth; for as he is a good judge, who, after a full cognizance and careful discussion of the case with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and fairly, being no way swayed either by his own inclination or by temptation from without; who is not biassed by any previous affection or dislike, not drawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed by profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazzled by specious appearance, not gulled by crafty insinuations or by fine speech, not tired by solicitation or importunity, not seduced by precedents or custom, not perverted by any such means which are indirect, impertinent, or extrinsical to the cause, so as to give a wrong sentence: so is he that assenteth to Christian truth; many considerations will exempt him from any suspicion of being anywise so corrupted.

For the Gospel cometh under trial in a guise nowise plausible or advantageous to human conceit; its garb and circumstances are nowise taking or attractive of any favour to it, but such rather as are apt to raise dislike and scandal against it, it being, as St. Paul saith, presented up “ in earthen vessels,” in a way very homely and contemptible. It representeth a mean, a poor, a persecuted, a crucified man, offering salvation and claiming obedience, attended by persons of like condition and fortune, urging the same overtures and pretences upon us: and what impression is such an appearance likely to work upon our fancy, which is prone to affect splendid and pompous shows?

The same doth not present to us any bribe of gain, doth not
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tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleasure, but challengeth a free sentence, and that such an one which may greatly prejudice our worldly interests, may spoil our profit, may stop our preferment, may dash all our pleasure. “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” “We must through many tribulations enter into the kingdom of God.” “Every one that will live godlily in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution.” “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” Such are the promises and enticements it useth.

Neither doth it sooth or court us by glozing speech, so as to recommend itself to our fancies, by raising in us a good conceit of ourselves; but dealeth bluntly and coarsely with us, faithfully and plainly acquainting us with our own case, involved in its cause; how grievous sinners we be, how obnoxious to justice we stand, how worthless we are, how wretched we shall be, secluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendereth upon its own terms, of confessing our guilt, disclaiming our merit, humbly seeking mercy, forsaking our own ways, and submitting to God’s will.

It doth not solicit us in trim language, nor by sly insinuations doth inveigle us to embrace it; but in downright terms, in a plain dress of speech, in a resolute strain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing, upon our refusal, extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas against the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden, and averse from things enjoined by it; against the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things which it condemneth or vilifieth—to dislike or despise things which it commendeth and magnifieth; against the affections of our heart, the dearest objects of whose love, delight, and care it would discard and drive from us—the most unwelcome and disgusting things whereto it would introduce and bring to us; against our strongest appetites and most earnest passions, the violent motions of which it doth curb and check, doth quell or doth allay; against many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, stoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth; against the stream of habitual usage and the torrent of common example, things so prevalent upon us; in fine, against ourselves, such as we naturally are, such as we by education and custom are made, whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly, whose conceit and credit it debaseth, whom it depressoeth into the confines of hell and misery—all within us, all about us, do with might and main oppose it: our lust, our fancy, our honour, our

interest, our reputation, our principles, our customs, our friends, our enemies, the flesh, the world, the devil—all combinedly are so many fierce adversaries, so many shrewd advocates, so many clamorous solicitors against its cause.

He, therefore, who, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, determineth in favour of it, must assuredly be a very upright, impartial, and incorrupt judge, declaring his sense purely according to the dictates of his reason and conscience.

What, indeed, greater integrity can a man express than in thus deciding a cause referred to him so much against himself, as he is naturally affected and standeth related to things here? What greater equity can he show than in avowing so harsh, so rough, so unpleasing truths, so little gratifying his own sense or fancy, so little favouring his profit or pleasure? What greater ingenuity can there be than to espouse that doctrine which pincheth our liberty within so narrow bounds—which layeth such restraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions—which interdicted to us so many enjoyments—which exacteth from us so great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there must concur humility, or a readiness to entertain sober and moderate opinions of ourselves, together with suitable affections and desires; for he that, with hearty persuasion and serious resolution, embraceth Christianity, doth thereby stoop to many things very cross to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and the haughty stomach of man.

The first step into the Christian state is a sight and sense of our own imperfection, weakness, baseness, and misery: we must discern and feel that our mind is very blind and our reason very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averse from good; that our life is void of merit and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably sad and wretched; that of ourselves we are insufficient to think or do any good in order to our recovery or deliverance; whence we are obliged to sore compunction of spirit for our deeds and our ease, to humble confession of our sins and miseries, to earnest supplication for mercy and grace to heal and rescue us from our sad estate. “Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.” “What shall I do to be saved?” “Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?” Such are the ejaculations of a soul teaming with faith.

He that entereth into the faith must therewith entirely submit his understanding, and resign his judgment to God, as his Master and Guide, being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however, to his seeming, unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although, like Abraham, lie

knoweth not whither he goeth; to approve that which God ordaineth, however distasteful to his sense; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God imposeth, how burthensome soever; being content that divine wisdom shall absolutely sway and reign over his wisdom; that his reason shall be puzzled, shall be baffled in many cases; that his mind shall be rifled of all its prejudices, its fond curiosities, its presumptuous confidences, of every thought and device advancing itself against divine truth.

He must abandon all good opinion of himself, all conceitedness of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; slighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wisdom, and the like advantages, natural or secular, which are so much prized in vulgar and worldly esteem, as things in themselves of no consideration, nor otherwise valuable than as talents entrusted by God, or instruments of his service; disowning them from himself, as things freely dispensed by God, and absolutely depending on his disposal; saying, with St. Paul, “Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.”

He also that cordially doth embrace the Christian doctrine, with resolution of conforming his practice thereto, must look for it to sustain much disgrace, to be hated, to be censured and taxed, to be slighted and scorned, to be reproached, to be spurned as a fool, an idiot, a humorist, a silly, superstitious, phantastical, morose body, by the world and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vicious fashions, its depraved sentiments and practices; “who will wonder (with indignation and scorn) at those who do not run into the same excess of riot,” speaking evil and railing at them, especially in times when wickedness “doth lift up its horn,” when profaneness doth not only much prevail, but doth insult and vapour over piety.

Every Christian, as such, immediately doth admit notions quite debasing high conceit, which ascribe all our good things purely to divine bounty, which allow us to own nothing but evils springing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions—from our guilty naughtiness and folly; which display our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, error, unworthiness, and forlorn wretchedness; which assure that we do subsist in total dependence upon God, continually needing his protection, succour, and mercy.

He must undertake the practice of duties extremely cross to

proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without resentment of them; to place himself beneath others; to be content with his state, how mean and poor soever; to bear patiently all events incident to him, however sad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the gust of a proud heart.

He that doth thus demean himself, embracing such notions, and complying with such duties, how can he otherwise than be a very humble, sober, and modest person?

5. To faith, much fortitude, much resolution and courage must conspire; for he that firmly persuadeth himself to be a Christian doth embark in a most difficult and dreadful warfare, doth undertake most high and hazardous enterprizes, doth engage in the boldest adventures that a man can set npon; he intendeth to encounter most puissant, stout, and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battle; to attack many a stronghold; to sustain many a sharp brunt; to endure many sore hardships; to run into many terrible dangers; to break through many tough difficulties; to surmount many great discouragements, impediments, and opposition.

He doth set himself in array against the world, the flesh, and the devil—that strong confederacy banded against him with their utmost force of strength and subtily.

He must combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries, and caresses, enticing to sin; by its frowns, menaces, and rough treatments, deterring from duty; ensnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleasures; seducing us by its bad customs and examples; and distracting us with its cares and amusenients of business.

He must cope with the flesh, that intestine and treacherous foe, which, with its corrupt prejudices and imaginations, with its stubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with its boisterous passions, doth “war against our soul, striving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of sin, which is in our members.”

He must grapple with the devil, that strong one, that greedy lion, that wily snake, that rueful dragon, always waiting to surprise us, always gaping to devour us, always laying close trains to entrap us, always throwing fiery darts of temptation to consume or scorch us. “Our wrestling (as the apostle doth express it) is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

In these conflicts he must expect to meet with many a grievous repulse, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a sore wound, to be often beat back, often knocked down, often thrust through, often trampled on and insulted over.

To set on these things is surely the highest gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to attempt and undergo such things is a daring and brave man indeed; he that successfully can achieve such exploits is truly a hero, most deserving notable trophies and everlasting monuments of renown.

The undertakings of Alexander, of Hannibal, of Cæsar, did not signify valour like to this; their achievements were but toys in comparison to these: those famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way; to have subdued their lusts and mastered their passions would have proved far more difficult than to get advantage in scuffles with armed men; to discomfit legions of devils would have been to them another kind of work than was the vanquishing squadrons of Persians, of Gauls, of Romans; to have set upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge, to have quelled those inward enemies, to have sustained affronts, disgraces, and afflictions with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage than all which they attempted—making a great show, but signifying little of true fortitude.

6. The noble virtue of patience is likewise necessary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience must concur: patience of labour in God's service, and obedience to all his commands; patience of hope, in waiting for the accomplishment of God's pleasure; patience of persecution for God's sake, and in conscience of our duty to him; patience of crosses and afflictions, by God's disposal allotted to us for our instruction, our exercise, our probation, our correction, and our improvement in goodness. For Christianity is the great school and special academy of patience, wherein we are informed, are inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things. The cross is the badge of our profession, without willingly carrying which we cannot be the children of God or disciples of Christ; whereby we are "conformed to the image of our Lord," the "man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief." Tribulation is our lot, to which we are appointed, and to which we are called. Persecution is the condition proposed to us, it being told us that "every one who will live godlily in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution." Affliction is the way toward our happiness; "for by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven." It is represented as a favour granted to us to suffer; for "to you (saith St. Paul) it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Christ, but to suffer for him;" it is our glory, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is "to run with patience the race that is set before us." In fine, faith and patience are the pair, which, being coupled together, draw us to the "inheritance of the promises"—patience being needful to introduce and support faith.

LOVE TO GOD.

BY THE RIGHT REV. ARTHUR LAKE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF BATH AND WELLS.

MATTHEW xxii. 37.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment.

IN bestowing our love we must observe an order and a measure ; an order, because concerning it we find in this text a first and second commandment ; a measure, because of the two commandments, the one is great, the other is but like unto it.

Having, the last Lord's day, opened the order, it followeth that this day, the measure be opened unto you.

For entrance hereunto we must take these two rules : first, though charity be a common due to God and our neighbour, yet must they not both be served by the same measure—and why ? The persons are unequal : God is infinite, our neighbour is finite, and we may not dispense equal portions to unequal persons.

The second rule is, that the order layeth the foundation of the measure, and therefore is the order correspondent unto the measure ; he that hath the precedence in, must have the pre-eminence of, our love ; and whom we must love last, we must love least. God is first in order, therefore must he have the greatest measure—thou must love him “with all thy heart, all thy mind,” &c. ; thy neighbour is but second, therefore he must have a lesser measure—thou must love him as thyself.

The time will not suffice me, so far as is meet, to handle both these measures ; wherefore I will confine my pains to the former, and that is expressed in these words, *all thy heart, mind, soul.* If we must love the Lord our God with all these, then we must love him perfectly : but that perfection is no other than the perfection of a man ; for thou must love him with heart, mind, and soul : so that we have two points to handle—first, the perfection of that love wherewith we must love the Lord our God ; secondly, the degree of that perfection ; where hence will arise a third point, and that is, the just reason why this first commandment is called great.

I begin with the perfection. In the question of virtue, divines require a double perfection, one *partium*, the other *graduum*: there is a perfection of the parts in man which must be seasoned with the virtue, and the virtue in those parts must arise unto its full pitch. This text requireth both these perfections in charity; the perfection of the parts of man are intimated in the enumeration of the heart, mind, soul, strength; unto these all our inward and outward abilities may be reduced: so that there is no power nor part of man that must not be qualified with the love of God.

But of this perfection I have spoken, when I showed you the seat of love; I made it plain unto you, that there was to be in our charity a perfection of parts. That with which we have now to do is the perfection of degrees. The text will tell us that it is not enough for every of those parts to have the love of God in them—they must also be wholly taken up therewith; and this perfection is noted by the word *all*, which is added to heart, mind, soul, strength. Let us come, then, to it.

A commandment is the sooner admitted if the reasonableness of the ground thereof be first discovered: I will therefore first discover the ground upon the reasonableness whereof this great measure is required. The ground is twofold; there is one in God, and another in us. The ground that is found in God is taken from the preface of this text, as Moses hath delivered it, and St. Mark hath repeated it; the preface is, “Hearken, O Israel, the Lord thy God is but one”—but one; therefore the entire object of our love. He will not give this, his glory, unto any other, neither will he endure any corrival herein; the beginning, the middle, and the end of this object is only He that is Alpha and Omega, first and last. Had we many Lord Gods, then might we have many objects of our love; the object can no more be multiplied than he can. Take all the parts of his title asunder and you shall find oneness and entireness therein.

He is first called Lord, which importeth the fountain of being, and goodness, which doth accompany the same. Now there is no other fountain but he; for as he is that which he is, so are all things of him, yea, and in him also—no one shareth with him herein.

As he is the only fountain of being, of all being—so is he of goodness, of whatsoever thing is good. Our Saviour telleth us, “there is none good but he;” and Moses, “that all which he made (and he made all) was exceeding good; every good and perfect gift cometh from him;” and if from him, then it is in him, be it *honestum, jucundum, or utile*—so that we can seek no-

thing without him which we may not find in him, and find it much more eminently.

Neither can we forsake anything for him, but in having him we shall have more than an abundant amends ; for as he is one, so he is all—all good is contained in this one Lord, *et bonorum totum totaliter diligendum* ; we can do no less than be wholly his that doth vouchsafe to be wholly ours.

As for the name God, which I told you importeth the three Persons, what every one is called, that he is only and graciously. “ Call no man father on earth (saith Christ), for you have but one Father, even your Father which is in heaven ; ” and he is a most loving Father ; no such tender bowels to be found—no, not in most natural and indulgent parents.

As for the second Person, which is God the Son, he is *unicus et unice dilectus*, an only Son, only begotten, most dearly beloved ; we can find no means of our being adopted, being accepted, but in him, and by him. Jesus is not divided how often doth he proclaim it in Isaiah : “ Beside me there is no Saviour : ” neither is Christ divided ; he is the only Prophet that can acquaint us with the counsels of God ; the only Priest whose sacrifice can pacify God ; finally, the only King that can subdue all the enemies of the Church, and make it partaker of his kingdom.

Neither is the third Person less *unus et omnia*. The apostle telleth us that there is but one Spirit, and he deriveth all graces from him, be they graces of adoption, or graces of edification ; he worketh all, and he works in all ; he is our Leader, our Comforter, our Sanctifier, our Supporter.

Ours, I say, for (which is the last note in the name) whether it be Lord or God that is one, they are that which they are unto us ; unto us have they appropriated their oneness, for they are to no other what they are to the Church—and the Church (as heretofore I have told you) is meant by *thou* ; and to the Church they communicate their all—all the treasures of their common and several good, so far as the Church is capable thereof. I suppose that, if you have well heeded what I have said, you will acknowledge that there is a fair ground in the Lord our God why he should challenge all our love. Let us come now and look upon ourselves, and see what ground thereof we can find there.

When the question was moved unto Christ, whether the Jews ought to pay tribute unto Cæsar or not, he called for the coin, and asked, “ whose image and superscription it bare ? ” and when they answered him Cæsar’s, he replied, “ Give unto Cæsar those things which are Cæsar’s ; ” but he added, to our purpose, that, upon the same ground, “ they must give unto God those things

which are God's." If the image and superscription were a just ground why coin should be paid unto Cæsar, where God's image is found there is as good a reason that that should be rendered unto him. Now God's image is found in us by nature, for "we were made according to his image ;" so that all which we receive from him we owe unto him by the law of creation. A second way is God's image in us—by grace ; for our regeneration is but a second creation, wherein we are reformed unto that image according to which God at first created us. All, then, is due unto God a second time, by the law of our redemption ; so that whether we look upon our heart, our mind, our soul, or strength, it may well be demanded of us, "What hast thou which thou hast not received ?"** And if we have received it all, the exactation is but reasonable, *si totum exigit à te, qui totum fecit, refecit te.* Surely St. Paul thought so when he willeth the Corinthians to "glorify God with their bodies, and with their souls ;" he addeth this reason, "for they are God's."

Well, then, we have found fair grounds of this measure ; for if God be such and such to us (as you have heard), the only lovely thing, and all that can be beloved, and we are all his, and all that we have is due unto him, both by nature and by grace, then ought we with all to express our love towards him.

But what is it to love him with all ? Surely it is to love him *sine divisione et sine remissione* ; none of our abilities must be divided, none of them must be slack in doing of this work. First, of the division.

We must not divide our heart, that is (as the Scripture speaketh), "have a heart, and a heart ;" a heart for God and a heart for the world ; will that which God willeth, and fulfil the will of his enemies also ; as, if we would keep good correspondence with both, we must always will the same thing, and our will must conform itself only unto God's: if it do not we do not, love God with all our heart, because our heart is divided.

As our heart must not be divided, no more must our mind ; we must not be double-minded, unstable in our resolution ; we must not be *μετεωρίζοντες*, like meteors hanging in the air between heaven and earth, or (as Elias told the Israelites) "halt between two, between God and Baal"—make all religions indifferent, and think that we may as well partake of the table of devils as of the table of the Lord, and, like waves of the sea, be tossed up and down with every blast of vain doctrine: but we must captivate our wits wholly unto God's wisdom, and be so resolute in abiding by his truth, that "if an angel from heaven

* "Quid habes quod non accepisti ?"

should bring us any other doctrine than that which we have received from God, that angel must be accursed." If our faith in God be not so fixed, our mind is divided—we do not love God with all our mind.

As we must take care that these reasonable faculties be not divided, so must we take care also of the unreasonable—of our soul—that is, the concupiscent faculty. I told you *that* hath two works; the one, to long after that which we would have; the other, to delight in it when we have it. Neither of these should be divided—and why? They must both attend the will. We may not long for that which we may not will, neither may we delight in that for which we may not long. If we long for more things than we do will, *non bene currimus*, we take not the right way to bliss—we fall into by-paths; and if we delight in more than we should long for, *non bene quiescimus*, we take up our rest where we shall find no rest; we have a divided soul—we do not love God with all our soul, as we should.

The other unreasonable faculty is noted by our strength: they call it the irascible faculty, and it is that courage wherewith we encounter those difficulties which either cross our longings or interrupt our delighting. This must not be divided, for this must attend the soul—the longing, the delighting thereof—it must bend all its force to further that, that so it may be both constant in longing, and perseverent in delighting. It must not be like Metius Suffetius, that wicked neutral—look on, and be ready to favour the strongest side; much less must it take part with the adverse. If our courage be thus divided we do not love God with all our strength; for we should imitate King David, to whom the Scripture beareth witness, that when he offered "he offered to God with all his strength," and so did he with all his strength dance before the ark. Whatsoever ability we have, we should employ it to the best advancement of the love of God.

You have heard the first impediment of "loving God with all our heart," &c. I told you of another, which is remissness or slackness: and this followeth necessarily upon the other; for, as a river that runneth strong in one channel will have a more weak current if it be divided, upon that principle, *vis unita fortior*, so fareth it with our ability, *pluribus intentus minor est ad singula sensus*—a man cannot divide and intend either his heart, or his mind, or his soul, or his strength, as he ought. Touching this remissness in the service and love of God, take a similitude from music. He that playeth upon an instrument may strike every string, but do it negligently or weakly, and so impair much of the sweetness of the music; therefore, in the Psalms, those Levites who were the musicians are called upon, not only to sing

and to play, but to “sing lustily, and with good courage,” and to praise God upon the “loud cymbals, and upon the high sounding cymbals.” Hath God care of instruments? Speaketh he not it rather for our souls—to intimate their devotion to God? Surely King David thought so when he said, “Awake harp, and lute; I myself will awake right early;” and doth not more often call upon his instrument than upon himself to praise and serve God. “Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name :” so that it is not enough to give every part unto God, except every part do its best to love.

I might carry you through all the parts, and show you what is the remissness of them: of the heart, which is a willing-nillingness, or a nilling-willingness; of the mind, which is a waving doubtfulness; of the soul, if the longing be faint, and the delighting have in it *acediam*, or a loathing; of the strength, if it sink or shrink. If any of our abilities be thus impaired, then is there a remissness in them, which hindereth our loving God with all our heart. But I choose rather to point it out in a generality, by two marks, one of which the Scripture setteth upon the thing beloved, the other upon true lovers. The thing beloved is said to be “sweeter than honey and the honey-comb; more to be desired than gold, than much fine gold;” more precious than pearls, and most costly stones: finally, nothing desireable is comparable to it. If we do not conceive so of the object of love—the Lord our God—there is apparent remissness in our love.

The mark set upon the true lovers is, they compare themselves to “parched ground, which gapeth after the rain;” to “a chased hart, that Brayeth after the water-brooks;” to those which are “love sick.” If we find not such a passion in ourselves, then is there likewise a remissness in our love. That which was the commendation of the Macedonians must be affected, by all Christians in the love of God. The abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty, abounded to the riches of their liberality; for “to their power I bear them record (saith St. Paul), and beyond their power, were they willing of themselves.” Such must be our disposition.

The rather because all division of our abilities is a plain abandoning of the love of God; for “no man can serve two masters (as Christ telleth us); if he love the one, he will hate the other;”—two loves, if one be good and the other bad, cannot stand together. Take an example or two: “The sons of God”—that is, those that did love God—fell in love with “the daughters of men.” What issue had they? Giants, such as fought against God. The Samaritans worshipped both the God

of Israel and the Assyrians' idols, and they were the most deadly enemies of Jerusalem. Never have you seen an heretic—that is, a person that professeth partly the truth and partly error—but he turneth a bloody persecutor of the truth; and he that loveth God and the world, out of his love to the world will do the greatest dishonour he can to God. This is the reason why God will have all or none. Ananias and Sapphira were stricken with sudden death for withholding a part of that whole substance which they freely vowed to God, and which, had it not been for their vow, they might have disposed at their pleasure. And if the embezzling of so small a matter, due upon no other ground than upon a free vow, received so heavy a doom, of how much sorer punishment shall we be worthy if we withhold our better things, which, upon a more necessary vow, are due unto God?

As for the remissness, that also is followed with a curse; for “cursed is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently;” and Christ will “spew out of his mouth” all those that are but lukewarm—that are neither hot nor cold. God loveth none but zealously cheerful lovers; and less than an entire dedication of all our faculties will not please him.

But mistake not: all other things besides God are not excluded from our love; if they were, how should we love our neighbour? whom, notwithstanding, in this text, we are commanded to love. Wherefore, for the farther understanding of this entireness of our love of God, we must not take other things *opposite* but *composite*; we must exclude nothing from our love that doth not enter into competition with God, and oppose itself against the love of God.

Secondly, if there be anything that may be beloved jointly with God, it must not be taken as *coordinatum* but *subordinatum*; it must not share equally with God, but keep its distance, and receive our love by a reflection from God. Excellent is that which St. Austin hath to this purpose: “Totum quicquid aliud diligendum venerit in mentem, illuc rapiatur, quo totius dilectionis impetus currit;” and “Minus te amat Domine, qui tecum aliquid amat, quod propter tenon amat.”

Thirdly, upon this inequality must our love ground an unequal estimate of things, and we must love God above all *appreciative*; we must account all in comparison of God to be but as dung—to be very loose.

Finally, according to the estimate must the heat of our affection be: we must love God above all *intensive* also; we must love other things as fit to be used, not fit to be enjoyed; yea, we must use all the world as if we used it not: but we must love God as him whom we would not only use, but enjoy also;

yea, so enjoy that we may be able to say, with King David, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire with thee. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” When we attain hereunto, though we love other things beside God, yet we love God as we ought; for “we will (as Solomon biddeth us) think upon him in all our ways.”

But I may not forget, that though I seem to have said much of our love of God, yet there is a limitation expressed in the text: though all be required, yet no other all than that which can be performed by man: for it is, “all thy heart, thy mind, thy strength,” &c. We may not expect that we should be able to love God according to his own worth, but we must love him to the uttermost of our power. Only God can love God as he is worthy; so the Father loveth the Son, the Son the Father, and the Holy Ghost both: but a finite creature can have but a finite virtue, which can bear no proportion unto God, who is infinite, as also is his goodness, which is all one with himself.

This serveth to check all pride, which thinketh that, by loving, it can demerit God: well may he vouchsafe to accept our poor endeavours; but the best come short of deserving aught at God’s hands, especially when the heart, mind, &c., though they be called ours, yet are they nothing but his gifts (as before you have heard), and so are all their endowments, namely, this of love.

And if we cannot merit by love, much less can we supererogate in loving; for who can give God more than is due, that learneth by this text that all is due unto God? Pretererogate haply we may in some indifferent thing which God leaveth to our choice, although that choice also must be guided by the general end whereat all our actions must aim, and the ability which we have received of God; whereof, if we employ not the one to the other, well may God be indulgent to our weakness in choosing: certainly it deserveth no commendation. But as for the act of loving, so far is it off, that we can supererogate anything that we cannot so much as pretererogate a jot therein.

I have opened the measure wherewith we must love the Lord our God—the perfection, the degree thereof; but I doubt I have not done it so popularly and plainly as that every one doth conceive me, and can try his own love by that which he hath heard, and discern when it is come to this strain: I will, therefore, propose, from the mouth of our Saviour Christ, certain plain rules, which are for the capacity of the meanest hearer, which, if he apply unto himself, he may thereby guess at the pitch of his love.

The first is, “He that loveth father, mother, wife, children,

&c., more than me, is not worthy of me." The second, "He that forsaketh not father, mother, wife, children," &c. The third, "He that hateth not father, mother, wife, children, &c., he cannot be my disciple." There be many things and persons (as you heard before) which we are allowed to love ; but we must love them only until they come unto the comparison. If, then, the question be, whether of the two we love more, to whether of them we will stick, in a case where both cannot be held ; or upon which of them we will fall foul, when it is not possible for us to keep in with both—if then we can, with Moses, "esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt," we conform ourselves to Christ's first rule. If, when God calleth, we can, with Abraham, forsake our country and our father's house, though it be to go to a country which we know not, we conform ourselves unto his second rule. And if we can be as resolute as Levi was, "who said unto his father and his mother, I have not seen them, neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children, that he might keep the word and observe the commandment of God," even that commandment which is delivered elsewhere, "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thine own soul, entice thee to idolatry, thy eye must not pity him, thou must not conceal him, thou shalt surely kill him, and let thine own hands be first upon him :" if thou canst, I say, be so resolute, then dost thou conform thyself unto Christ's third rule.

The examples which hitherto I have alleged show only what must be a Christian man's observance of Christ's rules, *quod sua et suos*, so far as concerns a man's goods or his friends ; but Christ's rules go a step farther, for they mention a man's own life also, and tell us how little we must set by that, in comparison of our love of God. Christ knew well that Satan hath a shrewd temptation to stumble thee when thou hast profited so far as *tua* and *tuos*, and that is to try thee how well thou dost love God, *quoad te*, in comparison of thine own person : "Skin for skin, and all that ever a man hath will he give for his life ;" affinity, consanguinity, amity—farewell all, so our life may be preserved : but our love of God must overcome this temptation also, and we must take, in this case, St. Paul for an example, who, being dissuaded from going to Jerusalem, because bonds and imprisonment did expect him there, made this answer, "What do you weeping and breaking my heart ? I am contented not only to be bound, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus."

A great resolution, and yet not so great as our love of God requireth of us. For though dying seem to be a bitter work,

yet to die for the name of Christ addeth much sweetness unto it. And why? It maketh a plain martyrdom; and of that St. Paul hath given this definition, that it is nothing else but *dissolvi et esse cum Christo*. To be dissolved doth little content nature; but what would a man rather desire than to be with Christ? For to be with him is to be as he is—that is, most happy; so that hitherto love is not come to its height, for a man may so far love God, and love God for himself, because his own good goeth, *pari passu*, with the love of God. Moses went farther: “Blot me out of the book of life, rather than thou shouldst not make good thy word to Israel:” a strange wish, and that of a thing impossible—for it is impossible that any child of God should be excluded from eternal life—so that he may seem to have wished rashly and vainly; but this commandment will excuse him, as it will St. Paul’s like wish, when I come to speak of the love of our neighbour. This commandment containeth the best commentary on his words, for they import no more but this absolute love of God, so absolute that were there no heaven wherewith his love should be rewarded—yea, though hell were the place wherein, notwithstanding his love of God, he should be eternally tormented—yet would he not withhold God’s due, he would love God with all his heart.

And, indeed, so high must we ascend in love, if we will ascend to that which is contained in this commandment, though our love should have a reward—a most plentiful reward; and we may, after the example of Christ and the saints, look upon it and encourage ourselves with the hope of it; yet that must not be the first motive of our duty: God may challenge it without a reward, and we must acknowledge it to be a just debt. Thus, if we love God, we love him as we ought—that is, we love him above all things, and we love him for himself, for that must needs follow when we love him for no other thing; no, not for our own sakes, but are willing to hazard all, even ourselves, and all for the love of him. From this measure, when we depart, we do offend against our love of God; how much more if we love those things which are contrary to him, and can be contented that others offend him, or are so graceless as to offend him ourselves.

But I must draw toward an end. The last point which I observed in my next was the reason why this is called the great commandment. I need give you no other reason than the doctrine which you have heard concerning our love of God, for you have heard enough to persuade you that the commandment very great; yet I will point at some few reasons.

The commandment, then, is great, first, in regard of the object;

for what can be greater than the Lord our God? Secondly, in regard of the act; for it maketh our nearest approach unto God, both in union and communion with him. Thirdly, in regard of the quality; it is the sweetest commander of all our abilities. Fourthly, in regard of the sovereignty; it giveth law to the whole man. Fifthly, in regard of the efficacy; it worketh the greatest effects. Sixthly, in regard of the commodity; it hath the most precious promises. Finally, in regard of the continuance; it outliveth all other graces, for “Charity never faileth”—other graces do not outlive this mortal life. No wonder, then, if St. Paul calls it a supereminent way, and in a comparison preferreth it before all gifts, not only of edification, but of adoption also.

And what is the use of all this, but to make us see how little we perform of this commandment, and how little cause we have to boast of the best that we do therein? Who is he that can deny that his abilities are divided, and that he loveth more things than God—yea, most things more than God, and those not only idle, but evil things also?

And if we cannot excuse our division, much less our remissness, the days are come which Christ foretold, and the charity even of the Church is grown key-cold—yea, everyone is come to that litherness which God taxeth in Malachi, “Ye say, behold, what a weariness it is!” Whether our love be put to do or to suffer, it is quickly tired, it quickly giveth over; and how should he ever yield all that doth repine, if but a part of his heart, mind, soul, or strength, be employed in the love of God? I report me for the truth hereof to every man’s conscience; and, because the time biddeth me end, I desire every man to keep a scrutiny hereof in his own bosom.

HOLINESS.

BY THE MOST REVEREND JOHN TILLOTSON, D.D.,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

1 PETER i. 16.

Be ye holy, for I am holy.

IN speaking to this attribute I shall, first, enquire what we are to understand by the holiness of God; secondly, endeavour to show that this perfection belongs to God.

1. What we are to understand by the holiness of God. There is some difficulty in fixing the proper notion of it; for though there be no property more frequently attributed to God in Scripture than this of holiness, yet there is none of all God's attributes which divines have spoken more sparingly of than this.

The general notion of holiness is, that it is a separation from a common and ordinary to a peculiar and excellent use; and this notion of holiness is applicable either to things or persons. To things: thus the vessels of the tabernacle and the vestments of the priests were said to be holy, because they were separated from common use, and appropriated to the peculiar and excellent use of the service of God. Holiness of persons is twofold, either relative and external, which signifies the peculiar relation of a person to God—such were called *ἱερέis*, priests, or holy men; or else habitual and inherent—such is the holiness of good men, and it is a separation from moral imperfection, that is, from sin and impurity: and this is called *ὅσιότης*, and the primary notion of it is negative, and signifies the absence and remotion of sin. And this appears in those explications which the Scripture gives of it. Thus it is explained by opposition to sin and impurity: “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness;” where holiness is opposed to all filthiness. Sometimes by the negation of sin and defilement; so we find “holy and without blame” put together: “Holy and without blemish:” “Holy, harmless, and undefiled.” It is true, indeed, this negative notion doth imply something that is positive; it doth not only signify the absence of sin, but a contrariety to it. We cannot conceive the absence of sin without the presence of grace; as take away crookedness from a thing, and it immediately becomes straight. Whenever we are made holy, every lust and corruption in us is supplanted by the contrary grace.

Now this habitual holiness of persons, which consists in a separation from sin, is a conformity to the holiness of God; and by this we may come to understand what holiness in God is. It signifies the peculiar eminency of the divine nature, whereby it is separated and removed at an infinite distance from moral imperfection, and that which we call sin; that is, there is no such thing as malice, or envy, or hatred, or revenge, or impatience, or cruelty, or tyranny, or injustice, or falsehood, or unfaithfulness in God; or, if there be any other thing that signifies sin, and vice, and moral imperfection, holiness signifies that the divine nature is at an infinite distance from all these, and possessed of the contrary perfections.

Therefore all those texts that remove moral imperfection from God, and declare the repugnancy of it to the divine nature, do set forth the holiness of God. "God cannot be tempted with evil." "Doth God pervert judgment, or doth the Almighty pervert justice?" "Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment." "Is there, then, unrighteousness with God? God forbid." "The just Lord is in the midst thereof; he will not do iniquity." And so falsehood, and unfaithfulness, and inconstancy. "A God of truth, and without iniquity." "The strength of Israel will not lie." "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, hath promised." "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." Therefore you shall find, that holiness is joined with all the moral perfections of the divine nature, or put for them. "I am the Holy One in the midst of thee;" that is, the merciful one. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." "The commandment is holy, and just, and good." "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true." "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" "He remembered his holy promise;" holy, that is, in respect of the faithfulness of it. "The sure mercies of David;" *τὰ ὁσια*, the holy mercies of David, which will not fail.

So that the holiness of God is not a particular, but an universal perfection, and runs through all the moral perfections of the divine nature; it is the beauty of the divine nature, and the perfection of all his other perfections. Take away this, and you bring an universal stain and blemish upon the divine nature. Without holiness, power would be an oppression; and wisdom, subtlety; and sovereignty, tyranny; and goodness, malice and envy; and justice, cruelty; and mercy, foolish pity; and truth, falsehood. And therefore the Scripture speaks of this as God's

highest excellency and perfection. God is said to be “glorious in holiness.” Holiness is called God’s throne: “He sitteth upon the throne of his holiness.” This is that which makes heaven: it is called “the habitation of his holiness, and of his glory;” as if this were the very nature of God, and the sum of his perfections. The knowledge of God is called the knowledge of “the Holy One.” “To be made partakers of a divine nature,” and “To be made partakers of God’s holiness,” are equivalent expressions. And because there is no perfection of God greater, therefore he is represented as swearing by this: “God hath spoken in his holiness.” “Once have I sworn by my holiness.” The angels and glorified spirits, they sum up the perfections of God in this: “And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” “And they rest not day and night saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” There is no attribute of God so often repeated as this; in some copies it is nine times.

2. I shall endeavour to prove that this perfection belongs to God.

First, from the light of nature. The philosophers, in all their discourses of God, agree in this, that whatever sounds like vice and imperfection is to be separated from the divine nature—which is to acknowledge his holiness. Plato, speaking of our likeness to God, saith, *ὅμοιώσις ἐξ ἐικανον καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γνέσθαι.* King Nebuchadnezzar calls God by this title: “I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.” In a word, whatever has been produced to prove any of God’s moral perfections, proves his holiness.

Secondly, from Scripture. There is no title so frequently given to God in Scripture, and so often ingeminated, as this of his holiness. He is called holiness itself, Isaiah lxiii. 15, where heaven is called “the habitation of his holiness,” that is, of God. His name is said to be holy: “And holy is his name.” He is called the Holy One: “The Holy One of Israel.” “The Holy One of Jacob.” He is said to be “holy in all his works and promises”—“in all his ways and works.” This title is given to each of the three Persons in the blessed Trinity. To God the Father in innumerable places. To God the Son: “To anoint the most holy.” The devil cannot deny him this title: “I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.” And the Spirit of God hath this title constantly given it: “The Holy Ghost,” or “The Holy Spirit,” or “The Spirit of holiness.” The Scripture attributes this perfection in a peculiar manner to God: “There is none holy as the Lord.” “For thou only art holy.” Holiness

is a communicable perfection ; but no creature can partake of it in such a manner and degree as the divine nature possesseth it. God is eternally holy—the fountain of holiness ; the creatures are derivatively and by participation holy. God is eminently and transcendently so ; the creatures in a finite degree. God is immutably so—it is impossible that it should be otherwise ; but no creature is out of an absolute possibility of sin. In this sense it is said, that “ he putteth no trust in his saints, and his angels he chargeth with folly ;” and “ he putteth no trust in his saints, and the heavens are not pure in his sight.” From all which I shall draw these inferences :—

1. If holiness be a perfection of the divine nature and a property of God—if in the notion of God there be included an everlasting separation and distance from moral imperfection, and eternal repugnance to sin and iniquity—from hence we may infer, that there is an intrinsical good and evil in things ; and the reasons and respects of moral good and evil do not depend upon any mutable, and inconstant, and arbitrary principle, but are fixed and immutable, eternal and indispensable. Therefore they do not seem to me to speak so safely who make the divine will, precisely and abstractedly considered, the rule of moral good and evil, as if there were nothing good or evil in its own nature antecedently to the will of God, but that all things are therefore good or evil because God wills them to be so. For, if this were so, goodness, and righteousness, and truth, and faithfulness would not be essential, and necessary, and immutable properties of the divine nature, but accidental, and arbitrary, and uncertain, and mutable ; which is to suppose that God, if he pleased, might be otherwise than good, and just, and true. For if these depend merely upon the will of God, and be not necessary and essential properties of the divine nature, then the contrary of these—malice, and envy, and unrighteousness, and falsehood—do not imply any essential repugnancy to the divine nature ; which is plainly contrary to what the Scripture tells us, that God “ cannot be tempted with evil,” that “ it is impossible he should lie,” that he “ cannot be unrighteous.”

If any man say that God hath now declared himself to be just, and good, and faithful, and now he cannot be otherwise, because “ he is a God of truth, and he changeth not”—this is to grant the thing ; for this supposeth the veracity and immutability of God to be essential and necessary perfections of the divine nature—and why not justice and goodness as well ? I say it supposeth veracity and immutability to be essential perfections, and not to depend upon the will of God—that is, that God cannot will to be otherwise than true and unchangeable ;

for, if he could, what assurance can we possibly have but that, when he declares himself to be good and just, he is or may be otherwise?

But I need not insist upon this, which seems to be so very clear, and to carry its own evidence along with it. I will only use this argument to prove it, and so leave it. No being can will its own nature and essential perfections—that is, choose whether it will be thus or otherwise; for that were to suppose it to be before it is, and before it hath a being, to deliberate about its own nature. Therefore, if this be the nature of God (which I think nobody will deny), to be good, and just, and true, and necessarily to be what he is, then goodness, and justice, and truth do not depend upon the will of God, but there are such things, such notions antecedently to any act of the divine will. And this does no ways prejudice the liberty of God; for this is the highest perfection, to be necessarily good, and just, and true; and a liberty or possibility to be otherwise is impotency and imperfection: for liberty nowhere speaks perfection, but where the things and actions about which it is conversant are indifferent; in all other things it is the highest perfection not to be free and indifferent, but immutable and fixed, and necessarily bound up by the eternal laws of goodness, and justice, and truth, so that it shall not be possible to swerve from them: and this is the perfection of the divine nature, which we call his holiness.

2. If holiness be the chief excellency and perfection of the divine nature, this shows us what account we are to make of sin, and wickedness, and vice. We may judge of every privation by the habit, for they bear an exact proportion one to another. Light and darkness are opposed, as habit and privation: if light be pleasant and comfortable, then darkness is dismal and horrid. And so holiness and sin are opposed: if holiness be the highest perfection of any nature, then sin is the grand imperfection and the lowest debasement of any being, because it is the most opposite to that, and at the furthest distance from that, which is the first excellency and perfection.

This should rectify our judgment and esteem of things and persons. We admire and esteem riches, and power, and greatness; and we scorn and contemn poverty, and weakness, and meanness—yea, grace and holiness, if it be in the company of these. We are apt to reverence and value the great, and the rich, and the mighty of this world, though they be wicked, and to despise the poor man's wisdom and holiness; but we make a false judgment of things and persons. There is nothing that can be a foundation of respect, that ought to command our

reverence and esteem, but real worth, and excellency, and perfection; and according to the degrees of this we ought to bestow our respect and raise our esteem. What St. James saith of respect of persons I may apply in this case: "Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and become judges of evil thoughts?" We are extremely partial; we make a false judgment, and reason ill concerning things, when we admire gilded vices, and weakness exalted to high places—I mean ungodly rich men and ungodly great men, for wicked men are properly ungodly, unlike to God—and when we contemn poor, and mean, and afflicted holiness and piety. Were but our eyes open and our judgment clear and unprejudiced, we should see a beauty and resplendency in goodness; even when it is under the greatest disadvantage, when it is clothed with rags and sits upon a dung-hill, it would shine through all these mists, and we should see a native light and beauty in it through the darkness of a poor and low condition: and we should see wickedness to be a most vile and abject thing when it appears in all its gallantry and bravery; we should look upon the poor righteous man as more excellent than his neighbour, and the profane gallant as the offscouring of the earth. We should value a man that does justice, and loves mercy, and speaks the truth to his neighbour; we should esteem any one more upon the account of any one of these simple qualities, than we should another man, destitute of these, upon the account of a hundred titles of honour and ten thousand acres of land. A wicked, unholly man, he is a vile person, who deserves to be contemned; and a holy man, he is the right honourable: "In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord." The vile person is opposed to him that fears the Lord. He that is bold to affront God, and sin against him, is the base and ignoble person. God himself, who is possessed of all excellency and perfection, and therefore knows best how to judge of these, tells us how we should value ourselves and others: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." To know these divine qualities and perfections signifies here, to understand them so as to imitate them. I do not speak this to bring down the value of any that are advanced in this world, or to lessen the respect which is due to them: I would have nothing undervalued but wickedness and vice; and I would have those who have store of worldly advan-

tages to recommend them, to add religion to their riches, and holiness to their honour, that they may be current for their intrinsic value, rather than for the image and picture of worth which the world hath stamped upon them.

3. If holiness be the chief excellency and perfection of the divine nature, then what an absurd and unreasonable thing is it to scorn and despise holiness—to mock and deride men under this very title! The world is much blinded that they do not see the great evil of sin, and the beauty and excellency of holiness; but that men should be so infatuated as to change the nature of things, and to mistake things of so vast difference as sin and holiness; to call good evil, and evil good; that sin, which is the vilest thing in the world, should be esteemed and cherished, accounted a piece of gallantry, and reckoned amongst the excellencies and accomplishments of human nature; and holiness, which is so great a perfection, should be a name of hatred and disgrace, to be contemned and persecuted; that that which is the glory of heaven, and the most radiant perfection of the divine nature, should be matter of scorn and contempt, as the apostle speaks in another case, “Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!”—do ye think the holy and just God will put up with these affronts and indignities? Ye do not only despise men, but ye despise God also. You cannot contemn that which God accounts his glory, without reviling the divine nature and offering despite to God himself. The malice reacheth heaven, and is levelled against God, whensoever ye slight holiness.

4. If God be a holy God, and hath such a repugnancy in his nature to sin, then this is matter of terror to wicked men. The holy God cannot but hate sin, and be an enemy to wickedness; and the hatred of God is terrible. We dread the hatred of a great man, because, where hatred is backed with power, the effects of it are terrible. But the hatred of the Almighty and Eternal God is much more dreadful, because the effects of it are greater and more lasting, than of the hatred of a weak mortal man. We know the utmost they can do: “They can but kill the body; after that they have no more that they can do;” they cannot hurt our souls; they cannot follow us beyond the grave, and pursue us into another world. But the effects of God’s hatred and displeasure are mighty and lasting—they extend themselves to all eternity. For who knoweth the power of his anger? Who can tell the utmost of what Omnipotent Justice can do to sinners? “It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;” because he that lives for ever can punish for ever. We are miserable if God do not love us. Those words, “My soul shall have no pleasure in him,” signify

great misery, and express a dreadful curse ; but it is a more positive expression of misery for God to hate us—that signifies ruin and destruction to the utmost. “Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee.” This is a *νικησία*, and expresseth less than is intended. God is far from being of an indifferent negative temper towards sin and wickedness ; therefore the Psalmist adds, “Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity ;” and then in the next verse, to show what is the effect of God’s hatred, “Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing.” Therefore, sinner, fear and tremble at the thoughts of God’s holiness.

5. Imitate the holiness of God : this is the inference here in the text, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” Holiness, in one word, contains all the imitable perfections of God ; and when it is said, “Be ye holy,” it is as much as if he had said, “Be ye good, and patient, and merciful, and true, and faithful ; for I am so.” Therefore religion is called the knowledge of the Holy One. And our imitation of God is expressed by our “putting on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Seeing, then, this is the chief excellency and perfection of God, and the sum of all the perfections which we are to imitate, and wherein we are to endeavour to be like God, let us conform ourselves to the holy God—endeavour to be habitually holy, which is our conformity to the nature of God ; and actually holy, which is our conformity to the will of God. I will not enlarge upon this, because I have pressed the imitation of these particular perfections—goodness, patience, justice, truth, and faithfulness—upon other texts. I shall only mention two arguments to excite and quicken our desires and endeavours after holiness.

(1.) Holiness is an imitation of the highest excellency and perfection. Holiness, I told you, signifies a separation from sin and vice, and all moral imperfection, and consequently doth comprehend and take in all the moral perfections of the divine nature—the goodness, and mercy, and patience, and justice, and veracity, and faithfulness of God. Now these are the very beauty and glory of the divine nature. The first thing that we attribute to God, next to his being, is his goodness, and those other attributes which have a necessary connection with it ; his greatness and majesty is nothing else but the glory which results from his united perfections, especially from his goodness, and those perfections, which are akin to it. Separate from God these perfections which holiness includes in it, and what would be left but an omnipotent evil—an eternal being infinitely knowing, and infinitely able to do mischief ? Which is as plain and notorious

a contradiction, and as impossible a thing, as can be imagined : so that, if we have any sparks of ambition in us, we cannot but aspire after holiness, which is so great an excellency and perfection of God himself. There is a vulgar prejudice against holiness, as if it were a poor mean thing, and below a great and generous spirit ; whereas holiness is the only true greatness of mind—the most genuine nobility and the highest gallantry of spirit ; and, however it be despised by men, it is of heavenly extraction and divine original. Holiness is the first part of the character of the wisdom that is from above. “ The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

(2.) Holiness is an essential and principal ingredient of happiness ; holiness is a state of peace and tranquillity, and the very frame and temper of happiness, and without it the divine nature, as it would be imperfect, so it would be miserable. If the divine nature were capable of envy, or malice, or hatred, or revenge, or impatience, or cruelty, or injustice, or unfaithfulness, it would be liable to vexation and discontent, than which nothing can be a greater disturbance of happiness : so that holiness is necessary to our felicity and contentment, not only to the happiness of the next life, but to our present peace and contentment. If reasonable creatures could be happy, as brute beasts are in their degree, by enjoying their depraved appetites, and following the dictates of sense and fancy, God would not have bound us up to a law and rule, but have left us, as he hath done unreasonable creatures, to satisfy our lusts and appetites without check and control. But angels and men, which are reasonable creatures, have the notions of good and evil—of right and wrong—of comeliness and filthiness—so woven and twisted in their very natures that they can never be wholly defaced without the ruin of their beings ; and, therefore, it is impossible that such creatures should be happy otherwise than by complying with these notions, and obeying the natural dictates and suggestions of their minds, which, if they neglect and go against, they will naturally feel remorse and torment in their own spirits, their minds will be uneasy and unquiet, and they will be inwardly grieved and displeased with themselves for what they have done. So the apostle tells us, that even the most degenerate heathens had consciences, which did accuse or excuse them, according as they obeyed, or did contrary to, the dictates of natural light. God, therefore, who knows our frame, hath so adapted his law to us, which is the rule of holiness, that, if we live up to it, we shall avoid the unspeakable torment of a guilty conscience ;

whereas, if we do contrary to it, we shall always be at discord with ourselves, and in a perpetual disquiet of mind; for nothing can do contrary to the law of its being, that is, to its own nature, without displeasure and reluctance; the consequence of which, in moral actions, is guilt, which is nothing else but the trouble and disquiet which ariseth in one's mind, from consciousness of having done something that contradicts the perfective principle of his being, that is, something which did not become him, and which, being what he is, that is, a reasonable creature, he ought not to do.

So that in all reasonable creatures there is a certain kind of temper and disposition that is necessary and essential to happiness, and that is holiness; which, as it is the perfection, so it is the great felicity of the divine nature; and, on the contrary, this is one chief part of the misery of those wicked accursed spirits, the devils, and of unholy men, that they are of a temper contrary to God—they are envious, and malicious, and wicked—that is, of such a temper as is naturally a torment and disquiet to itself: and here the foundation of hell is laid in the evil dispositions of our spirits; and till that be cured, which can only be done by holiness, it is as impossible for a wicked man to be happy and contented in himself, as it is for a sick man to be at ease; and the external presence of God and local heaven would signify no more to make a wicked man happy and contented than heaps of gold, and concerts of music, and a well-spread table, and a rich bed, would contribute to a man's ease in the paroxysms of a fever, or in a violent fit of the stone. If a sensual, or covetous, or ambitious man were in heaven he would be like the rich man in hell—he would be tormented with a continual thirst, and burnt up in the flames of his own ardent desires, and would not meet with the least drop of suitable pleasure and delight to quench and allay the heat; the reason is, because such a man hath that within him which torments him, and he cannot be at ease till that be removed. Sin is the violent, and unnatural, and uneasy state of our soul; every wicked man's spirit is out of order, and till the man be put into a right frame, by holiness, he will be perpetually disquieted, and can have no rest within himself. The prophet fitly describes the condition of such a person: “But the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast forth mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.” So long as a man is unholy, so long as filthiness and corruption abound in his heart, they will be restlessly working, like wine, which is in a perpetual motion and agitation till it have purged itself of its dregs and foulness. Nothing is more turbulent and

unquiet than the spirit of a wicked man ; it is like the sea, when it roars and rages, through the strength of contrary winds ; it is the scene of furious lusts and wild passions, which, as they are contrary to holiness, so they maintain perpetual contests and feuds among themselves.

All sin separates us from God, who is the foundation of our happiness. Our limited nature and the narrowness of our beings will not permit us to be happy in ourselves. It is peculiar to God to be his own happiness ; but man, because he is finite, and therefore cannot be self-sufficient, is carried forth, by an innate desire of happiness, to seek his felicity in God. So that there is in the nature of man a spring of restless motion, which, with great impatience, forceth him out of himself, and tosses him to and fro, till he comes to rest in something that is self-sufficient. Our souls, when they are separated from God, like the unclean spirit in the Gospel when it was cast out, they “wander up and down in dry and desert places, seeking rest, but finding none.” Were the whole world calm about a man, and did it not make the least attempt upon him—were he free from the fears of divine vengeance, yet he could not be satisfied with himself ; there is something within him that would not let him be at rest, but would tear him from his own foundation and consistency ; so that, when we are once broken off from God, the sense of inward want doth stimulate and force us to seek contentment elsewhere. So that nothing but holiness, which re-unites us unto God, and restores our souls to their primitive and original state, can make us happy, and give peace and rest to our souls. And this is the constant voice and language of Scripture, and the tenor of the Bible. “Acquaint thyself with God, that thou mayest be at peace.” “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart.” “The work of righteousness is peace, and the effects of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.”

Seeing, then, holiness is so high a perfection, and so great a happiness, let these arguments prevail with us to aspire after this temper, that “as He who hath called us is holy, so we may be holy in all manner of conversation ; because it is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy.”

NOTE.—The metaphysical argument of Archbishop Tillotson, as to the nature of good and evil, pp. 53, 54, will be found to be examined in the Preface. It will not bear a vigorous investigation.

ON GOOD WORKS.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND GILBERT BURNET, D.D.,

LORD BISHOP OF SARUM.

ARTICLE XII. OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.

THAT good works are indispensably necessary to salvation—that “without holiness no man shall the Lord”—is so fully and frequently expressed in the Gospel, that no doubt can be made of it by any who reads it; and, indeed, a greater disparagement to the Christian religion cannot be imagined, than to propose the hopes of God's mercy and pardon barely upon believing, without a life suitable to the rules it gives us. This began early to corrupt the theories of religion, as it still has but too great an influence upon the practice of it. What St. James writes upon this subject must put an end to all doubting about it; and whatever subtleties some may have set up, to separate the consideration of faith from a holy life, in the point of justification, yet none among us have denied that it was absolutely necessary to salvation. And so it be owned as necessary, it is a nice curiosity to examine, whether it is of itself a condition of justification, or if it is the certain distinction and constant effect of that faith which justifies. These are speculations of very little consequence, as long as the main point is still maintained, that Christ came to bring us to God, to change our natures, to mortify the old man in us, and to raise up and restore that image of God, from which we had fallen by sin. And, therefore, even where the thread of men's speculations of these matters may be thought too fine, and in some points of them wrong drawn, yet so long as this foundation is preserved, that “every one who nameth the name of Christ” does depart from iniquity, so long the doctrine of Christ is preserved pure in this capital and fundamental point.

There do arise out of this Article only two points, about which some debates have been made. First, whether the good works of holy men are in themselves so perfect that they can endure the severity of God's judgment, so that there is no mixture of imperfection or evil in them, or not. The Council of Trent has decreed, that men, by their good works, have so fully satisfied the law of God, according to the state of this life, that nothing is wanting to them. The second point is, whether these good works are, of their own nature, meritorious of eternal life, or not. The Council of Trent has decreed that they are; yet a long softening is added to the decree, importing that none ought to glory in himself, but in the Lord, whose goodness is such, that he makes his own gifts to us to be merits in us; and it adds, that because in many things we offend all, every one ought to consider the justice and severity, as well as the mercy and goodness of God; and not to judge himself, even though he should know nothing by himself. So then that in which all are agreed about this matter is, first, that our works cannot be good or acceptable to God, but as we are assisted by his grace and Spirit to do them; so that the real goodness that is in them flows from those assistances which enable us to do them. Secondly, that God does certainly reward good works; he hath promised it, and he is faithful and cannot lie; nor is he "unrighteous to forget our labour of love." So the favour of God and eternal happiness is the reward of good works. Mention is also made of a full reward, of the reward of a righteous man, and of a prophet's reward. Thirdly, that this reward is promised in the Gospel, and could not be claimed without it, by any antecedent merit founded upon equality: "since our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The points in which we differ are, first, whether the good works of holy men are so perfect that there is no defect in them, or whether there is still some such defect mixed with them that there is occasion for mercy, to pardon somewhat even in good men. Those of the Church of Rome think that a work cannot be called good if it is not entirely good, and that nothing can please God in which there is a mixture of sin. Whereas we, according to the Article, believe that human nature is so weak and so degenerated, that, as far as our natural powers concur in any action, there is still some allay in it; and that a good work is considered by God according to the main both of the action and of the intention of him that does it; and as a father pities his children, so God passes over the defects of those who serve him sincerely, though not perfectly. "The imaginations of the

heart of man are only evil continually." "In many things we offend all," says St. James. And St. Paul reckons that he had "not yet apprehended, but was forgetting the things behind, and reaching to those before, and still pressing forward."

We see, in fact, that the best men in all ages have been complaining and humbling themselves, even for the sins of their holy things, for their vanity and desire of glory, for the distraction of their thoughts in devotion, and for the affection which they bore to earthly things. It were a doctrine of great cruelty, which might drive men to despair, if they thought that no action could please God, in which they were conscious to themselves of some imperfection or sin. The midwives of Egypt feared God, yet they excused themselves by a lie; but God accepted of what was good, and passed over what was amiss in them, and "built them houses." St. Austin urges this frequently, that our Saviour, in teaching us to pray, has made this a standing petition, "Forgive us our trespasses," as well as that, "Give us this day our daily bread:" for we sin daily, and do always need a pardon. Upon these reasons we conclude, that somewhat of the man enters into all that men do. We are made up of infirmities, and we need the intercession of Christ to make our best actions to be accepted of by God: for "if he should straitly mark iniquity, who can stand before him? But mercy is with him, and forgiveness." So that, with Hezekiah, we ought to pray, that "though we are not purified according to the purification of the sanctuary, yet the good Lord would pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God."

The second question arises out of this, concerning the merit of good works; for upon the supposition of their being completely good that merit is founded; which will be acknowledged to be none at all, if it is believed that there are such defects in them that they need a pardon, since where there is guilt there can be no pretension to merit. The word *merit* has also a sound that is so daring, so little suitable to the humility of a creature, to be used towards a Being of infinite majesty, and with relation to endless rewards, that though we do not deny but that a sense is given to it by many of the Church of Rome to which no just exception can be made, yet there seems to be somewhat too bold in it, especially when *condignity* is added to it. And since this may naturally give us an idea of a buying and selling with God, and that there has been a great deal of this put in practice, it is certain that, on many respects, this word ought not to be made use of. There is somewhat in the nature of man apt to swell and to raise itself out of measure, and to that no indulgence ought to be given in words that may flatter it; for we

ought to subdue this temper by all means possible, both in ourselves and others. On the other hand, though we confess that there is a disorder and weakness that hangs heavy upon us and that sticks close to us, yet this ought not to make us indulge ourselves in our sins, as if they were the effects of an infirmity that is inseparable from us. To consent to any sin, if it were ever so small in itself, is a very great sin: we ought to go on, still cleansing ourselves, more and more, “from all filthiness, both of the flesh and of the spirit, and perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Our readiness to sin should awaken both our diligence to watch against it and our humility under it: for though we grow not up to a pitch of being above all sin, and of absolute perfection, yet there are many degrees, both of purity and perfection, to which we may arrive, and to which we must constantly aspire. So that we must keep a just temper in this matter, neither to ascribe so much to our own works as to be lifted up by reason of them, or to forget our daily need of a Saviour, both for pardon and intercession; nor, on the other hand, so far to neglect them as to take no care about them. The due temper is “to make our calling and election sure, and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling;” but to “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,” ever trusting to him, and “giving thanks to God by him.”

DUTY OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. RALPH BROWNRIG, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

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DUTY OF CONFESSING OUR SINS.

BY THE VERY REVEREND JOHN DONNE, D.D., DEAN OF SAINT PAUL'S.

—

DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS.

BY THE REV. THOMAS GATAKER, B.D.

—

DUTY OF CHRISTIAN RESOLUTION.

BY RICHARD ALLESTREE, D.D., REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY, OXON

INTRODUCTION.

HAVING now considered the most prominent of those duties which devolve on man from the character and attributes of the Deity, we pass to notice those which devolve on him as being in a state of probation. The chief of these must be Self-examination and Confession of Sin to God (including, of course, Contrition), Watchfulness, and Christian Resolution; these will imply Humility, Resignation, and many other Christian graces, which our limits will prevent us from enforcing in detail.

It was in silence and in solitude that the prophets of old time were admitted to communion with the Most High, beheld the awful veil lifted up from the dread aspect of futurity, and heard with the spiritual ear the voice of God; it was in silence and in solitude that St. Paul, whether for a time set free from the flesh or lifted up bodily from the earth, was carried into the third heaven; and it was in silence and in solitude that the beloved disciple listened to that great voice, as of a trumpet, and saw the Son of Man, having the seven stars in his right hand, and walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. He was, by the imperial order, banished from the mighty cities of the earth—from the courts of princes and the assemblies of learned men; but though the glories of this world were thus removed from his eyes, and though a rude and lonely island in the Ægean sea was appointed as his dwelling, yet was his heart filled with that peace which the earth can neither give nor take away; and the very atmosphere around him was bright with the radiant forms of his heavenly visitants. His feet were, it is true, restrained from the streets of Rome and Ephesus; but the New Jerusalem, with all its starry splendours, stood revealed to his sight, and the solitary exile, whom they thought to cut off from communion with congenial spirits, was made the companion of cherubim and seraphim—the favourite of the Ancient of Days. If we would wish to cultivate a spirit of great holiness, we must, at times, withdraw from the world and the things of the world. It was on the mountain tops, and in the desert, that our Saviour himself retired to pray; there it was that Moses and Elias talked with him of the decease which he should accomplish at

Jerusalem ; there it was that his face became bright as the light, and his raiment white as the snow ; there it was that angels came and ministered unto him : and it was in the loneliness of the distant Patmos that St. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. There is something inexpressibly awful in the thought of withdrawing from the world, to be alone with God. It matters but little whether we retire to the hills and the fields, consecrating the earth as one vast temple to its Maker—beholding the forests as its solemn aisles, and the clouds of heaven as the tracery of its roof—or whether we enter into our closets and shut our door ; it matters but little whither we go, provided we feel ourselves to be alone. The Church of Rome may have carried her system of fasts and vigils to an unscriptural extent, and based it upon erroneous motives ; but we are likely to fall into a more dangerous error—to neglect those observances which Christ himself recommended as profitable, and enjoined as necessary. Without frequent seasons of retirement and meditation the Christian life would soon languish—the Christian course soon terminate. We may not, shall not, behold the court of the All Holy One of Israel ; we shall not hear the voice like the sound of many waters, the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the earthquakes ! we shall not see the vials poured out upon the earth and upon the air. These tremendous visions will not come to us in our hours of retirement, as they did to the most holy of the apostles ; but we shall feel the influence of sacred meditation stilling the tumult of our passions—we shall hear the still, small accents of the adopting Spirit whispering into our hearts the earnest of everlasting peace.

The law of human opinion—that most formidable barrier to the progress of true religion—varies in its form with the varying circumstances of society. Originating as it did in the depravity of human nature, and supported as it is by the subtilty of the devil, it changes as the course of events causes any change in the character of his policy. Under all circumstances, however, the opposition of this law to the law of God has been uniform. It exhibited itself in the dark ages of barbarism, when passion, rather than principle—impulse, rather than reflection, were the springs of action ; it was manifest, when, under the blandishments of a chivalrous honour, worldly motives and worldly sanctions were exclusively promulgated ; it has appeared when an age, professing to be more refined, has set up the creations of a self-sufficient reason against the revelations of God ; and, even in our day, it is an instrument, a mighty instrument, in the hands of Satan to obstruct the advance of truth. Christianity is in-

deed the popular religion; but is the standard of popular thought and sentiment formed upon a Christian model? We acknowledge the religion of the Gospel; but do we not see, totally distinct and independent of this, a religion of the world? Upon no subject is the contradiction between these systems more strong than on that here referred to; and the question between the world and the Gospel has been in no respects more grossly misrepresented. Resolution, courage, manliness of spirit, have been absurdly supposed to have no counterpart in the Christian scheme; and there is a prevalent disposition to charge those persons with weakness, with an abject and unmanly spirit, who evince a real concern about their spiritual interests. Enthusiasm, which is doubtless in many cases indulged to a vicious excess, is much more carefully guarded against than the far more dangerous error of indifference; and there are those who rest the whole of their religious character on the fact that they are not what they call saints or zealots. Now, when we know how directly Christianity, with its doctrines of humility, meekness, and resignation to the divine will, is opposed to the pride of human nature, we shall not find it difficult to account for this state of opinion. That fanaticism and hypocrisy have very frequently obstructed the truth, and seduced many weak minds from the sobriety of scriptural faith, is not to be denied; but to throw upon all spiritual religion the stigma of weakness and delusion is a proceeding, the awful results of which, to their own souls, those who indulge in it frequently discover when too late. The Gospel, indeed, does not profess to make any cold, systematic classification of the virtues; courage, therefore, and resolution, may not stand forth in that scheme, clothed with all that pomp of adventitious splendour, which, in the code of honour, they were allowed to wear. But in the Christian character there is a steadfastness which has a more decided tone—a firmness which is founded on an infinitely stronger basis: it asks not, like worldly courage, the stimulus of revenge to arouse it to action; it seeks not for its recompense the passing triumph of temporal applause; it has its source in principles far more permanent and unchanging than can be found in the feeble nature of man. It derives its support from heaven itself; and is, therefore, embued with some portion of that steadfastness which cannot be moved—of the immutability of that faithful Saviour, who, in the midst of all the changes of nature and humanity, is still the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. And what, we would ask, is the nature of that Gospel, and what the character of those obligations to which we are required so solemnly to

recognize and fulfil? Is it any ingenious subterfuge for evading the heavier burdens and the more important duties of existence? Is it any systematic concession to the weaknesses of humanity—any indulgence to the gross appetites of a degraded nature? Is it any chartered asylum for the idle and the profligate, holding out to them an immunity from the cares of the probationary state—the perpetual enjoyment of ease, and indolence, and repose? If it were, we might then call religion a weakness, and pronounce those who thought chiefly of spiritual things blinded and pitiable enthusiasts. But, oh, how far from this is the true state of the case. A perpetual watchfulness and an uncompromising warfare—the denial of self and the renunciation of the world—these are the requirements made of us; and, to perform these duties, we must indeed quit us like men, and be strong. The wicked man is so without an effort: the world, the flesh, and the devil are all engaged together on the side of his own carnal inclinations; his eyes see only the flowers at his feet; his ears take in only the song of the siren; his heart is accessible only to the emotions of worldly passions; and, though the precipice be before him, he heeds it not. He is doing that which is good in his own eyes, and the thunders of God's law roll on in a region too high for him to hear them; he has no need of firmness—there is no temptation which he has to resist—and the very exertion of a resolved and manly mind would be contrary to the will of his Master and the law of his members.

Nations, as well as individuals, are bound to the same duties of self-examination, watchfulness, confession, and Christian resolution. It was one of the peculiar faults of the Jewish people to imagine that they, as a nation, did most certainly serve and honour God. The wickedness of individuals was, they deemed, foreign to the subject; and their national deficiencies and continual lapses they forgat. Their occasional outbreaks of zeal—the periods of excitement when the profession of religion agreed with their violent passions—stood alone in their remembrance: and priding themselves, as did Jehu, in what with the same error they called their zeal for the Lord, they fancied that the Eternal was indebted to them, bound to protect and prosper their undertakings. They were thus lifted up, but not upright; and though reminded that “the just shall live by faith,” and depend on the undeserved mercy of God, they still cherished their mistake, and he punished them by depriving them of all they most valued of empire, and wealth, and freedom, and—oh! worse than all these—of the services of the temple. The princes and people of

the Chaldeans were placed in a peculiar favourable situation for cultivating the favour of the Lord. Nebuchadnezzar, one of the greatest sovereigns that ever lived, had been, by a series of the most astonishing miracles, wrought both in his presence and on himself, brought to a knowledge of the truth, and, so far as we can collect, died in the favour of God. He had continually about him some of the holiest of men, he and his court; and we may believe the greater part of his people were aware of those wonders which God had wrought in Egypt: and in the hands of that great Being they had been the means of punishing this wavering and irreligious people. Yet with all these advantages, both princes and people, after the death of Nebuchadnezzar, went on in a blind career of impiety and idolatry, till the divine patience was exhausted, and the anger of the Lord fell on the haughty Babylon. Scarce twenty years had elapsed since that great monarch who turned to God had been laid in the tomb; but how changed was all in the imperial city? There was, indeed, the feasting and the splendour; the sounds of mirth and revelry rang through many a stately hall: but the praises offered were to the gods of wood and stone, of gold and silver, of brass and iron. The vessels of the temple were profaned by the ribald merriment of unhallowed orgies; and the seven-branched candlestick shed its flood of light over the idolatrous assembly. “But in the same hour came forth fingers of a man’s hand, and wrote over against the candlestick, upon the plaster of the wall, upon the king’s palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.” The hour of reproof was come in the characters whose insufferable brilliancy dazzled the eyes and daunted the heart of Belshazzar. The forgotten Daniel read the blazing sentence of his fall: no preparation had been made for that awful moment. “And in that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain; and Darius, the Median, took the kingdom.” The example thus handed down was not observed: the empire of the Medes and Persians, of the Greeks and the Romans, inherited successively the awful memento, and alike disregarded it. In the day of their power the earth and the sea were theirs; and wheresoever men were found, there were their subjects. Now the very relics of their grandeur are in ruins; and, except in the mind of the scholar, the remembrance of them is passing away from the earth. They did not “stand upon their watch, and set them upon the tower, and watch to see what the Lord would say unto them, or what they should answer when they were reproved of him.” The mercy of heaven has set our highly favoured country upon that proud eminence on

which those mighty empires stood: and though many and heavy judgments have been inflicted upon her, and though from some of them yet she is scarcely recovered, still she wields a moral power incalculably greater than they ever wielded, and is set up for purposes more awfully important than they had to execute. It is our duty to pray and to strive, that, as a nation, we may take the warning thus given us, and prepare for the day of our visitation, that we may answer when we are reproved.

Churches, too, as well as nations, have cause to look to the reproof of the Lord, and so to order their conduct and discipline as to be ready in the day of his coming. “Behold, I come quickly (said the Lord to the apostle St. John, with reference to the Church at Ephesus), and I will take thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.” There are many ways in which the Lord may be said to reprove his Church—by persecution, by permitting the corruption of doctrine, the relaxation of discipline, the prevalence of schism, the interference of them that are without; and though he has said that against his Catholic and Apostolic Church, which is founded upon the Rock, even Christ Jesus, the gates of hell shall not prevail, still he has neither promised nor intended that his Church should be free from trials, dangers, and temptations. Partly to try who are his, and partly to make a palpable distinction between the visible and invisible Church, the powers of evil have been permitted, from time to time, to make terrible inroads—to raise a storm, whose clouds have shrouded the battlements, and whose waves have lashed the foundations of the yet unharmed and unshaken Church.

Let us, then, look at those reproofs which have been in past ages administered to her, and gather, from the temporal judgments which fell upon her from their neglect, the duty of watchfulness on our own part. We shall not now speak of the sufferings of the apostles and their immediate descendants, because they were called to a career of persecution, and despite they lived as the scorn and off-scouring of all things, and when they were removed from an earth that was not worthy of their presence, they entered upon the rest of their Lord. Yet in all things they were more than conquerors; and when we speak of judgments upon the Church, we must not mention those mere worldly afflictions which hurried the martyrs of her earliest ages into the presence of their approving Master. But when the Gospel was known and appealed to in the courts of princes—when the descendants of the Cæsars acknowledged themselves to be the vicegerents of a higher and more awful Monarch, then

were there duties imposed upon the Church which were till then unknown—duties which she must either fearlessly and uncompromisingly perform, or stand away from the path of her known duty, and remain unprepared when the day of reproof should come. And how was this season of prosperity employed? Was it in spreading the Gospel among the heathen—in sounding the promises and the terrors of her pure and holy code into imperial ears? Was it in combating the temptations to ease, and slothfulness, and worldly pomp—in lengthening the cords and strengthening the stakes of the tabernacle? Alas! no. It was consumed in luxury and splendour, in relaxation of discipline, and in a gradually increasing conformity with the spirit of the world. These, which were in themselves visitations of divine wrath, were, however, not all the punishment that the lukewarm Church received. Even the very doctrines of Christianity (though there were some who kept fast His word, and denied not the name of Him who bought them)—the very doctrines of Christianity became corrupted, and the poison of heresy flowed where the life-giving streams of the truth once prevailed. It would be a gloomy task to tell of those men, who, in the pride of their own reason, arraigned the revelations of the Most High, and framed schemes which they deemed better adapted to human necessities, and more in accordance with human philosophy, than the plans of God; to tell of some who denied the divinity of our Lord, and of others who denied his humanity—of some who rejected the Old Testament, and some who curtailed the New. There was scarcely a system too impious—scarcely a hypothesis too absurd, to find followers in that day of general corruption; and can we think that such a state of opinions could comport with holiness of life? Can we suppose, when men are amending the revelations of God's truth, that they are likely to be very scrupulous in obeying his word?

That was a period not only of much error and much unsteadiness of belief, but also of much laxity of principle and much carelessness of conduct. Such persons as are anxious to be wiser than others—wise above that which is written, in matters of belief, who set up their own private interpretations of Scripture, and esteem themselves too enlightened to follow the fathers and the authority of the Church, will generally be found too enlightened to bow, with much reverence, to the precepts of the moral law. But, during these ages, God had not forgotten to reserve some who had not bowed the knee unto Baal. Here and there, amidst the desert of the world, was some green spot where the pure Gospel flourished and an apostolic constitution

prevailed; and though the Church of Rome became even more corrupted than the Churches of the East, still even within her own bosom did she nourish some, who, while they acknowledged the apostolicity of her constitution, and thanked God for the good of which she had been the instrument, contended earnestly for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. The warnings which, like the approaches of old age—the fading eye, the failing ear, the decreasing strength, and the sinking energy—give token to man of a coming change, had passed unheeded by the Eastern Church: her doctrines had gradually become corrupt and her discipline lax—her clergy slothful and her laity careless; but she still delayed standing upon her watch and setting herself upon the tower, to watch what the Lord would say unto her, and what she should answer when she was reproved of him. Hundreds of years passed away in this state of criminal indifference: till the day of retribution came, the followers of the false prophet possessed the dwellings that were not theirs, and the crescent flamed above walls built for the worship of Jesus. In times not long after land after land was rent from the communion of the Roman Church, till at length, stripped of her authority, and for a time divested of her power, she was left like a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, like a besieged city.

Meditating on these things, let us turn our attention to our own Church; and here, with much to be thankful for, we shall find no small inducement to watch. The spirit of the Gospel is awake in her; she is powerfully and steadily aiding the Redeemer's kingdom, and never was there a time when so much singleness of purpose, such zeal, such energy, and such careful preparation was displayed as there is now by our truly Apostolic Church. But yet, if there be any truth in the warnings of the Lord, he has somewhat against us, and well will it be for us if we prepare for the day of rebuke, and repent, and do our first works. The reproofs which our Church has had, and still is receiving, consist not in outward persecution, though there are those who cry, “Raze it, raze it, even to the ground!”—not in corruption of doctrine, for she still holds fast the truth—not in slothfulness and luxury, for she has girded on the sword, and is warring against the evil one; but in the prevalence of heresy and schism, the relaxation of discipline, and the interference of those who are without. Can we look on the numbers of what are called denominations of Christians, mark the trifles upon which they separate, and notice the bitter feeling with which they regard one another and *all of them* the Church—can we perceive

the more than semi-infidel, who denies the Lord that bought him, banded with the open despiser of religion, and the too superstitious Romanist, against the Church, and not feel that something is wrong in our spiritual condition? Can we look on the small number of our communicants, our half-filled churches, and the complacency with which those who disregard the ordinances are regarded, and not feel that there is just cause of rebuke from Him, who, by his holy apostle, declared, “And if he regard not the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican;” and again, “With such hold thou no fellowship—no, not even to eat?” Once more: can we remark the efforts made by many in high places to impede the usefulness, cripple the exertions, degrade the dignity, and expedite the fall of our Church, and all this under the pretence of aiding and forwarding her plans, without seeing cause to watch, and consider what we shall say unto the Lord when we are reproved of him? The Church of Ephesus was an Apostolic Church, but her temples are in ruins. The Church of Constantinople was an Apostolic Church, but the Turkish mosque stands where once her shrines lifted their marble foreheads. The Church of Rome was an Apostolic Church, but how is the fine gold become dim! And who shall say what vials of wrath shall not be poured out on the Church of England, if she does not watch and pray?

To conclude. Let us consider the duty, as applying to individuals: for if all are partakers of chastisement, surely all are partakers of reproof. It may come to us in the silent march of Time, and sweep from our side into eternity one and another of those whom we have loved, till we are compelled to finish our weary pilgrimage in loneliness, and look forward with an earnest longing to immortality, as to a joyful meeting. It may come to us in the slowly-pacing hours of affliction, when, borne down with sorrow and sickness, we feel inclined to say, with the royal preacher, “Surely all is vanity and vexation of spirit.” It may come to us in the tumult of worldly distress, when the walls which we had built up for our defence are carried away by the waves of God’s providence, and we find that we have been trusting to “broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” In seasons such as these it is our duty to listen attentively; for in every event there is, if we will but hearken, a voice from the Lord speaking of eternal things. It speaks to us of the uncertainty of every earthly good; it reminds us of the days wherein we shall say, we have no pleasure in them; and then, lest we should be too much cast down and dispirited with the melan-

choly truth, it sharpens our sight, till we can discern, through the valley of the shadow of death, the gates of the New Jerusalem, blazing with gems, and leading into golden streets—points out our own title to the blessed inheritance, and urges us onward in our career. Should we not listen with trust, as well as with attention, to a voice like this? Often will it come to us when, in silence and solitude, we open the oracles of God, and seek, in prayer, directions from his Holy Spirit. Yes! there are times when the world, and the things of the world, will vanish from before the face of the Christian—when heaven and earth will appear in their true light, and invested with their real value: and who that can enjoy that inward calm produced by the Gospel—that peace that witnesseth our acceptance with God, would place his affections on the perishing things of this world? But humility, as well as attention and trust, is necessary in listening to the reproof of the Lord. What are we, that the Lord of the whole earth should take account of us? His reproofs are for our good, unworthy as we are, and are intended to lead us through a light affliction, that is but for a moment, to a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

C.

SION COLLEGE,
February 1, 1842.

THE DUTY OF SELF-EXAMINATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. RALPH BROWNRIG, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

PROVERBS XX. 9.

Who can say, I have made mine heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

THE trial and examination of our hearts and ways, to see in what state and condition our souls are in reference to God, what progress we have made in that great work of mortification—the enquiry into this is a duty, though hard and difficult, yet exceeding useful and beneficial to us. The Scripture often calls upon us to make this enquiry. “Commune with your own hearts,” saith the Psalmist. “Examine yourselves; prove yourselves,” saith St. Paul. “Let us search and try our ways,” saith the prophet Jeremiah. And, accordingly, the saints and servants of God have set themselves to this holy practice. “I have considered my ways,” saith David. “I commune with mine own heart, and my spirit makes diligent search.”

And it is worth the enquiry what return and account the saints have made upon this search and scrutiny—what verdict and sentence they have passed upon themselves. And Solomon gives it up here, both for himself and all other men. And it is a sad and sorrowful account; it is like the cry of the leper, “I am unclean, I am unclean!” It is the confession of the publican, “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner!” It is Job’s lamentation, “I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of men?” Briefly, here is the account, that, upon an impartial search, the spirit of a Christian must give up for itself; and that is a sad discovery of much sin and corruption.

The holiest man living, if he look strictly into his conscience, shall find many stains and blemishes in his soul, many defilements of sin, many imperfections of grace, many failings and slips in his best performances, which will draw from him this mournful exclamation, “Who can say, I have made mine heart clean, I am pure from my sin?”

The text, then, is a serious conviction of our sinful condition; it assures us of the imperfection of our mortification; it tells us there is not any, the most regenerate man, that is fully freed from the contagion and pollution of sin. We may say of this portion of Scripture what St. Paul saith of the Scripture in general—this Scripture concludes all under sin, “that every

mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."

For the better understanding of this truth, we will take the words into a twofold consideration.

First, we will consider the matter proposed, and that will show us the nature of the duty of mortification.

Secondly, we will consider the manner of propounding of it ; it is by way of question and interrogation—"Who can say?" And that shows us the difficulty of the duty of mortification, how hardly it is performed.

First, the duty ; and then, secondly, the difficulty.

First, let us consider the duty to be done—that is, the cleansing of our hearts to be pure from sin. It is a good description of that great and necessary work of mortification, and in it we may take notice of three things :—

First, here is the act itself to be performed ; that is called here *mundatio*, a making clean, or cleansing.

Secondly, here is the object or matter that must be wrought upon and cleansed—the heart.

Thirdly, here is the measure and degree of it at which we must aim ; that is expressed in the last clause of the text—"I am pure from my sin."

First, the first thing considerable is the action itself—"I have cleansed ;" and it affords us a threefold meditation.

I. The first is from the nature of the action ; it is called a cleansing, or making clean.

II. A second is from the property of the agent ; that is, "I."

III. The third is from the circumstance of the time in the performance of it—"I have cleansed."

I. For the nature of the action ; it is called a cleansing. It is a word implying some change and alteration that is to be made in us. The text doth not say "I am clean," but "I have cleansed, I am cleansed," that betokens a state and fixed condition ; but "I have cleansed," that implies a change and alteration. It is one thing to be pure, another thing to be purged. A thing may be originally and constantly pure, and so continue—it was never otherwise ; but that which is purged was formerly impure, some dross was mixed with it, it was tainted with pollution. St. John points out that difference: "He that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, as God is pure." God is pure, the saints are purged and purified. God is originally and unchangeably pure ; but the saints are not so—they are purged, and altered, and changed, and so brought to purity.

It shows us two things :—

1. The nature of sin ; it is a matter of uncleanness.

2. The nature of grace ; it hath the virtue of cleansing us.

1. Consider here the nature of sin : it brings upon our souls a spiritual uncleanness. It is the usual expression by which the Scripture sets out the evil of sin ; it is called an uncleanness. " You have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, to commit iniquity." Again, the Scripture calls it a defilement : " The mind and conscience of unbelievers are defiled." It is called a pollution : " I saw thee polluted in thine own blood." There sins are called " the pollutions of the world." It is called a filthiness : " They are altogether become filthy :" " Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit."

To make us conceive this uncleanness of sin, the Scripture sets it out by many similitudes.

(1.) The uncleanness of sin is represented by those many legal uncleannesses which are specified and forbidden in Moses' law. All those typical pollutions served to this purpose—to shadow out the spiritual defilements which sin brings upon us.

(2.) Again, the uncleanness of sin, is represented to us by the uncleanest beasts, as the dog, the swine, the serpent ; all these are made emblems and representations of sin. " De grege facta est egregia creatura," saith St. Bernard. Man, the choicest of all the creatures, by sin becomes like the unclean beasts.

(3.) It is represented to us by the uncleanest diseases, the botches and sores of Egypt, the loathsomeness of leprosy—those filthy and abhorred diseases that the Scriptures mention, all of them serve to make us conceive the pollutions of sin.

It should fasten our most serious thoughts upon this consideration, that sin brings upon us a great uncleanness ; it will afford us these three useful and pious meditations :—

[1.] Is sin an uncleanness ? Uncleanness is a debasing quality ; it vilifies whatsoever it cleaves unto. Unclean things are vile things. Purity carries with it an excellency ; everything the more pure it is the more precious it is. The purest gold is the richest ; the more dross is in it, the more vile and base it is. " Impuritas est ex mixtura viltoris." (Scalig.) Mingle with anything that which is baser, and ye make it viler. " Sordescit aliquid, cum inferiori miscetur natura ; etiam de puro Argento sordidatur Aurum, si misceatur." (Augustine.) It is so with sin ; it debases that soul that commits it, and makes it vile.

What Jacob said to his son Reuben may be truly said to every sinner : " Thou wert the excellency of dignity ; but now thou hast defiled thyself thy excellency is gone, thou art become vile and contemptible." Man was in honour, but by sinning, he is become as the beasts that perish. It is piety and

goodness that raiseth the price and worth of any man. “The righteous (saith Solomon) is more excellent than his neighbour;” but sin debases him and makes him worthless. Hence it is that sins are called, by the apostle, passions of ignominy, dis-honourable lusts. It is the main brand of reproach that is laid upon Satan; he is called an unclean spirit, not so much a rebellious, or malicious, or impious (though he be all these); but this is his name of infamy that the Scripture sets upon him—“He is an unclean spirit.”

[2.] Is sin an uncleanness? Uncleanness, is a loathsome quality. Filthiness stirs up abomination and a loathing in us. Other considerations of sin stir up other affections. The disobedience of sin breeds anger; the enmity of sin begets hatred in God; the mischief of sin begets revenge; but the impurity of sin, the uncleanness of it, that begets abomination.

This pollution of sin makes the soul of a sinner look loathsome in the eyes of God. “How abominable and filthy is man, which drinks iniquity as water!” “A wicked man is loathsome,” saith Solomon. And God threateneth his people if they sin against him: “My soul shall abhor you.” And the prophet Zechariah expresses a mutual antipathy betwixt God and a sinner: “My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.” Solomon passes this doom upon a wicked man: “The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.” It is a full expression; it implies not a dislike only, or some distaste or offence, but it imports a deep detestation, an utter abhorring: the heart rises, the blood boils at that which it loathes and abominates.

[3.] Is sin an uncleanness? Uncleanness is a thing odious in itself, and for itself, though there be no other consequences that do attend it. If it be unclean it is odious, though it be not pernicious. Filthiness is in itself the matter of detestation. Loathsome diseases are more odious to us than painful diseases, though they be more dangerous. Who had not rather be tormented with the stone, than be defiled with leprosy? Such a disease is sin. Were there no other malignant or mischievous attendants upon it—did it not provoke God’s anger, incense vengeance, lay us open here to misery, sink us into hell, plunge us into perdition—were these stings taken out of it, yet who would put such an unclean and filthy serpent into his bosom? Here is enough to set us off from any wicked way, that it defiles and pollutes us, that it makes us loathsome to God and his angels, and we shall one day loathe ourselves for it. “Ye shall remember your ways wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight.” Thus Job abhors himself. Thus David cries out of his sins: “My wounds stink, and are

corrupt." Nay, "Ipsae vulnerum cicatrices fætent." (Nazianz.) A penitent sinner loathes the very scars of his sins after they are healed.

It should make us to look upon sin in these true appearances of it; esteem it according to the odious aggravations that God hath put upon it. And that would beget in us *sanctum fastidium*—an holy loathing of it. We have gentle constructions, more plausible and moderate names, more seemly colours, which we put upon it, and that makes it go down so easily with us. It is a good rule of Parisiensis, "Sancti cogitant turpia, ut magis abominentur." A good Christian will consider sin in the most loathsome notions of sin, so to beget in himself an abomination of it.

That is the first thing considerable—the nature of sin is an uncleanness.

2. This action of cleansing shows us *naturam gratiæ*—the sovereign virtue of grace and repentance; it is of a purging virtue, it hath a power of cleansing us from the pollutions of sin. All those purifications and ceremonial cleansings in the law of Moses were so many types and representations of it. It is compared—

(1.) To clean water, which washes away filth and bodily pollution. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness." And what he means by that he tells you, "I will put my Spirit within you." Those streams of living water, they shall wash away all our defilements. This God promises to his Church: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." So Isaiah calls the people to repentance under this similitude: "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before me."

(2.) This work of grace is compared to a wind. So it came upon the apostles. And Christ compares the Spirit of regeneration to the blowing of the wind: and the wind hath a power of cleansing. "The wind passeth and cleanseth." Jeremiah tells of a wind to fan and to cleanse. Such are the breathings of the Holy Spirit.

(3.) It is compared to a fire; and that is of a purifying nature—that eats out and consumes all dross and corruption. And such is the grace of Christ: "He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." Isaiah puts both water and fire together, to express the efficacy of the grace of God: "He shall wash away the filth of Zion, and purge it with the spirit of burning." The prophet Malachi tells us, Christ's Spirit shall be like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap, or the herb borith, that is effectual for cleansing.

This grace of Christ is able to fetch out the greatest stains and pollutions of sin. David's sins of adultery and murder brought upon his soul a foul uncleanness; yet he hopes that grace was able to cleanse him: "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." The sins of Jerusalem were of a foul pollution, oppression, and bloodshed—heinous pollutions; yet what saith the prophet? "Wash you, make you clean: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." So the Corinthians' sins were heinous pollutions: "Extortioners, drunkards, adulterers, Sodomites: but ye are washed (saith St. Paul), but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

That is the second thing—the virtue and efficacy of grace is able to cleanse us. We have done with the action; come we—

II. To the agent—"I have cleansed." It may seem somewhat strange that the text here makes us agents in this great work. The Scripture elsewhere seems to deny the ability of it to any man: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one," saith Job. "Can the blackmoor change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may you also do good that are accustomed to do evil." What said the king of Israel? "Am I a God, to cleanse a man from his leprosy?" We must know the Scripture speaks of a double cleansing.

1. Sin is cleansed in our justification, when it is pardoned and forgiven us. This cleansing belongs only to God: it is he alone that can thus cleanse us; it is he alone can blot out our iniquities, pardon our offences. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgressions of his people?" The Pharisees were in the right in this point, when they said, "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

Indeed, there are some dispositions and gracious preparations required on our part, as sorrow and humiliation; and some conditions, as faith, and seeking unto Christ; but the very act of forgiveness is only God's. But—

2. Sin hath another cleansing, and that is by mortification, and regeneration, and conversion. The progress of these acts God works in us and by us: his Spirit enables us to carry forward this work, which he graciously begins, and to cleanse ourselves. He gives us the first stock of grace, and enables us to improve it: as a surgeon first dresses a wound, and gives the wounded man salve to dress it himself. To this the Scripture exhorts us: "Wash you, make you clean." "O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayst be clean." "Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilements of flesh and spirit."

“ Cleanse your hands, ye sinners ; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.” This work, as it is principally God’s, so it is ours also under God, and in the strength of his grace we may and must perform it. It was Naaman’s error ; he would be cleansed from his leprosy, and sit still ; Elisha must do all : no—what saith the prophet ? “ Go unto Jordan, wash thyself seven times in it, and thou shalt be clean. Up, and be doing, and the Lord shall be with thee.” And then—

III. There is a third thing considerable ; that is, the circumstance of time—“ I have cleansed.” The negative part belongs to the question ; but here I look upon it as a work of continuance. No question the saints have entered upon this work ; but yet it is not so finished, but still they must go on in this work of cleansing. Mortification, it is not *in instanti*—a work soon and easily dispatched, and rid out of hand, but of long continuance ; it requires progress and perseverance. The wound of sin may be given in an instant ; but the cure of sin is a matter of more length of time. Poison may suddenly be taken down ; but it is not expelled and wrought out again but by tract of time. It is a sign they never truly begun it that do say or think they have already finished it. Sin never dies suddenly, though we may do so. The death of sin, it is a lingering death. “ *Sentiant se mori*,” was the emperor’s speech. A Christian must feel the growth and progress of mortification. It is well if we can say of this work of mortification, as Christ said of his work of redemption, when we are a dying, “ *Consummatum est* ;” it is now at last finished : till then we cannot. A good Christian dies daily to sin ; but the last gasp of sin is with the last breath of life. It is final grace that finishes this work.

We have done with the action of mortification ; come we now—

Secondly, to the object or matter—that is, our heart. “ I have cleansed mine heart.” Indeed, this work of cleansing must be entire and universal ; it must be as large as the whole man. “ *Flesh and spirit* :” “ *The whole spirit, and soul, and body* :” “ *Hands and heart* :” “ *Feet, and hands, and head*,” as Peter speaks. The plaster must be as broad as the sore. Sin is an overspreading contagion ; there is no sound part in us ; we must mortify all our members that are upon the earth ; the whole body of sin must be abolished.

But yet this cleansing is, in a special manner, appropriated to the heart. Why so ?

I. *Cor*, it is *conceptaculum peccati* : the heart is the fountain and original from whence all other uncleannesses do stream and flow. “ From the heart (saith Christ) come murders, adulteries ; all these sins defile a man.” This made Solomon call for

our greatest care over our heart: “Keep thine heart with all diligence; from thence come the issues of life;” aye, and of death too. Life is, in the outward man, like light in the air; but it is, in the heart, like light in the sun: from thence flows the source of all uncleanness. As Moses put his hand into his bosom, and it came out leprous, so our outward man draws all its pollution from the heart within. An evil heart makes an adulterous eye, a deceitful tongue, a violent hand: all outward sins are the offspring of the heart.

II. *Cor*, it is *receptaculum peccati*: the heart is the lurking and starting-hole to which sin betakes itself. Outward restraint may hinder the actual commission of sin; but yet our corruptions will recoil to our hearts. “His heart gathers iniquity to itself,” as a corrupt putrified part will gather corruption to itself; there is the sink and sediment of all corruptions: as in winter we see the trees seem to be dead, not a leaf left on the boughs or branches; but then the sap runs to the root, that keeps life in it. A man may be free from outward enormities, and yet his heart be guilty of inward pollutions. Thus Job reproves his accusers: “You shall say, Why persecute we him, seeing the root of the matter is found in me?” This makes the work of mortification so hard and difficult, because it is so hard to work upon the heart: as we know it is an easier matter to heal an outward wound, than to staunch an inward bleeding, or to cure an ulcer in our inward parts. *Cor primum vivens, et ultimum moriens*: as in nature, so in sin.

III. *Cor*, it is *sustentaculum peccati*; the heart is the proper seat and residence of sin; there is a full sufficiency in the heart to commit any sin: there is the adultery of the heart in lust, the murder of the heart in hatred, the theft of the heart in covetousness. Outward awe may deter us from these bodily commissions, and yet our hearts may be guilty of these very sins. “In ipsa intus voluntate peccat, qui non voluntate, sed timore non peccat,” saith Augustine. *Fecit quia voluit*. He sins that would sin, though he doth not act it. Remove objects, break off instruments, avoid occasions, yet our hearts can conceive and act sin in itself. “Voluntas ipsa sibi imputatur, nec excusari potest per illam perficiendi infelicitatem, operata quod suum fuerat.” (Tertullian.) The heart is a sinner, though the outward man concur not.

There remains one particular more, and that is—

Thirdly, the measure and degree of mortification—“I am pure from my sin.” This is the high aim that a Christian must set to himself to press forward to perfection. *Purgatio*, it is *motus ad peritatem*: purging is never sufficiently done till it attain to

pureness. What one can do we shall hear hereafter; but this is that which we must desire to do—not only to break the strength of sin, that it do not over-master us, but to fetch out the very life of sin, that it may not molest us; not only subdue the Canaanite, but destroy him; not only lop off the boughs of sin, but pluck up the roots of sin; *non ut nè regnet tantum, sed ut nè sit*; not only that it bears no sway with us, but that it have no place in us. This is the aim and measure of a Christian. *Mensura hominis*, it is *mensura angeli*: we should aim at angelical perfection, to do God's will in earth as it is done in heaven. Our primitive purity, that we had in paradise—to recover that; our final purity, that we shall have in heaven—to attain to that; that must be the aim and pursuit of a Christian.

And the expression of the text—it is very significant—"pure from my sin;" it lays our sins at our own doors, and so it concerns us to rid ourselves of it. Sin, it is my sin.

I. It is my sin, *habet originem à me*. Sin, it is ours, as being the issue of our nature, the offspring of our will. Many disputes have been of the first cause and original of sin; the text tells us whence it is, to whom we must impute it—even to ourselves. Neither Satan's suggestions, nor any other temptations, can excuse us from it. "Every man is tempted; when he is drawn away of his own lust, and is enticed." *Partus sequitur ventrem*: the devil may be the father, but our own hearts, that receive his temptations, are the mother. The mother's side is the surest, and so we must own it.

II. It is my sin, and only mine. Our good works are ours, but yet God's too; nay, they are more God's works than ours; it is he that works all our good works in us. But as for our sins, they are only ours; we may say of them as that devout penitent said of his illegitimate child, "In eo ego nihil habui, praeter peccatum." The sinfulness of all our actions, it is only ours. If God shall say to us, "Take that which is thine own,"* it will prove only sin and impiety.

III. It is my sin, even after it is past, and after it is committed; yet, while the stain of it is not fetched out by repentance, our consciences must own it. Alas! we think sin vanishes with the acting; we count it but a transient thing; when it is past and over we hope never to hear more of it. No, it is ours still, till it be pardoned and purged. "God requires that which is past," saith Solomon. "My sin (saith David) is ever before me;"† it haunted his conscience. Indeed, when God discharges us of it, then we may say, "What have I to do with thee?"‡ But,

* "Tolle quod tuum est, et abi." † "Transit actu, manet reatu."
‡ "Peccatum non meum."

till then, the guilt of it will dog thee, the uncleanness of it will still cleave to thee.

IV. It is my sin that I must purge : that sin which, above others, I account mine, and do most delight in—that, above all, must be cleansed and mortified. The Pharisee boasted he was free from other men's sins ; he was not like the publican. We bless ourselves if the sins of other men break not out upon us. I am not so or such a sinner ; but “are there not sins with you, even with you also ?” as the prophet speaks to the people of Israel. No ; labour to purge and mortify thy proper and special sin.

1. The sin of thine inbred and natural inclination. For though our original sin disposes us to all sins, yet our personal inclinations carry us more strongly to some kind of sin.

2. My sin—the sin of mine age, that to which thine years and age do dispose thee ; as childhood is idle, youth wanton, old age covetous ; these must be striven against.

3. My sin—the sins of my calling and vocation. Every calling hath its temptations, unto which they are subject. These must be cleansed. We must be able to say, with David, “I have kept myself from mine iniquities.”

We have seen the duty proposed—“the cleansing of our hearts from our sin ;” now follows—

Secondly. The manner of propounding of it, which is by way of question and interrogation—who can say ? And that shows the difficulty of the duty ; and, in respect of the full perfection of it, the impossibility. And here we have—

First. The person questioned—who ?

Secondly. Then the enquiry itself—who can say, I have cleansed ?

First. Here is the person questioned—who ? Indeed this question is not meant nor made for all sorts of sinners : there are such whose lives testify against them, such as are unquestionably notorious sinners.

I. Solomon propounds not this question to the profane man ; such as sin with greediness, that make a trade and profession of sin. There is no question to be made of them ; such are judged of all, and condemned of all ; such God complains of, “I have not found out thy sin by secret search, it appears openly.”

II. Nor doth he propound this question to the grossly ignorant man, that knows not his own heart, but is utterly unacquainted with the state and condition of his soul, what it is, or what shall become of it. His soul serves him for salt only, to keep him from putrifying. Solomon tells us of such as know no difference betwixt the soul of a man and the soul of a beast.

III. Nor is this question intended for the negligent and careless man, that never minds the welfare of his soul, takes no heed

to his ways, never communes with his own heart, nor makes enquiry into the condition of it; such as Jeremiah speaks of, that “never say to themselves, What have I done?” These, and such as these, live and lie in sin, never have escaped the pollutions of the world in the least degree. Their condition is, questionless, miserable.

No; the question reaches to the best sort of men, those that have made a good progress in this work of cleansing and mortification; yet which of them can say, “I am pure from my sin?”

1. Who, though never so innocent and unblameable in human conversation? Though no man can accuse them, yet God and their own consciences may justly condemn them. There is in the holiest man that that doth defile him; some remainders of corruption still stick to him. What saith holy Job? “If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me.”

2. Who, though never so penitent, yet who hath found, and felt, and bewailed sufficiently all his corruptions? Though they wash themselves with nitre, or fuller’s soap, yet their spots and blemishes will not utterly be removed. “Quis in hac vita sic mundus, ut non sit magis, magisque mundandus?” (Augustine). Purge out the old leaven, as ye are unleavened. A Christian is much unleavened, and yet still hath leaven to purge out.

3. Who, though never so vigilant and watchful over his ways? Though “he keep his heart with all diligence,” as Solomon advises him, yet some sins of surreption will steal in upon him. They that are “clean yet had need to wash their feet,” saith our Saviour; nay, their hands, and their hearts, too, daily defilements will grow upon them.

4. Who—*quis à peccato absolutus?*—who, though already justified, though he hath obtained the pardon of his sins, and his peace and acquittance from God, yet can say he is fully cleansed from his pollutions, which his sins have brought upon him? Besides the guilt of sin, there is *macula peccati*: the stain that sin brings upon the soul. Though his transgression be pardoned, yet that sticks fast on; the corruption is not so soon wrought out, and complete purity fully attained. “Numquid, quia deleta est iniquitas, finita est infirmitas?” saith St. Augustine. Though the iniquity of sin be pardoned, yet the infirmity of sin that is not presently cured. “He forgives thine iniquity (saith David) and heals thy diseases.” The sun enlightens in an instant; but it heals and warms by leisure and degrees. Pardoning mercy is of quicker dispatch than healing mercy. David was presently pardoned, as soon as he confessed his sin. “The Lord hath

taken away thy sin (said Nathan), thou shalt not die ;" but yet it cost him many prayers and tears to be cleansed and healed. How doth he complain of broken bones ; how doth he pray, " Wash me, cleanse me, establish me with thy free Spirit." He gives not over those supplications. He was soon freed, *à morte peccati*, from the death of sin ; but not so soon, *à morbo peccati* ; long did he groan under the languishings of that sin ere he could recover them. The man that was deadly wounded was saved in the way from the danger of death ; but yet he was left in the inn, or lazarus-house, to be cured of his wounds. " Infunditur vinum, et oleum in via ; sed sanatur in stabulo," saith Augustine. The wine and oil of mercy saved him from death ; but yet he must continue in the surgeon's hands to get health and strength.

That is the person questioned. Now let us consider—

Secondly, the question itself—" Who can say, I have made mine heart clean ?" And this form of question—who can say ? prevents and convinces many sly evasions and false answers that men are ready to return to this question.

I. The question stands thus—who can say ? it runs not thus—who doth say ? There are those that say it, and would have others think it, that they are pure, and clean, and free from sin. Solomon points them out ; and they are not a few ; he tells us there is a whole generation of them : " There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness." And he tells us you may know them by their looks : " O, how lofty are their eyes, and their eyelids are lifted up," admiring themselves, despising all others. Just of the Pharisee's disposition ; he had no sin to be pardoned, no corruption to be bewailed, no lust to be mortified, no grace to be supplied ; but all his devotion is, " God, I thank thee, I am not like other men, nor like this publican." The prophet Isaiah sets them down in their colours ; they say to all others, " Staud by thyself ; come not near me ; I am holier than these." Christ must not eat with publicans and sinners ; nay, he is no prophet with them if he suffer a poor sinner to touch him. And who, I pray you, is this that finds this fault ? A Pharisee, you may be sure. But what was his name ? He was Simon—a leper, for all his holiness.

II. The question is thus framed—who can say ? not thus—who will say he is pure from his sin ? The saints will not say so, saith the Pelagian, though they may be free from sin ; but out of their humility they forbear to say so. It is " propter periculum inanis gloriæ," as Bellarmine speaks in the like case. Lest they should seem to be vain-glorious, they will be content to be accounted sinners. What is this but to compliment, not

to complain to God that we are sinners? Thus tell the Pelagians, that infants are sinners: no, that they deny, but yet they will allow them to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. That is but *stylus curia*: you may, for form sake, use these words, though they be not sinners. What saith St. Augustine to these sleights and evasions?—"Non tantum humiliter, sed et veraciter se dicunt peccatores." It is not only an humble, but a true confession, that we are all sinners. "If we say we have no sin, there is no truth in us," saith St. John. It is not only want of humility, but of truth, and conscience, and sincerity, to say we are no sinners.

3. The question is—who can say? It is not thus expressed—who dare say he is pure from sin? as being so assured. The Papists teach, no man must say so, *ob incertitudinem gratiae, non ob certitudinem peccati*. They tell us the meaning of the words is, that we cannot be assured we are in the state of grace, that our sins are pardoned, that our souls are sanctified, that our corruptions are mortified, though they be so. Hope well we may upon probable conjectures, but certain we cannot be of our spiritual condition. An assertion so destructive to all true comfort, that Luther said well, "that for this opinion alone the Church of Rome was to be abhorred." No, the text imports not a good Christian's uncertainty of grace, but his certainty of sin: it bids us not doubt of our spiritual conversion, but to be truly sensible of our sinful corruption; not to suspect *primitias gratiae*, to call in question the first-fruits of grace, but to acknowledge and bewail, *reliquias peccati*, the remainders of sin.

A Christian may certainly find the work of God's grace in himself, and take comfort in it, and yet withal may feel in himself the motions of sin, and confess and bewail it. The soul of a Christian is like the womb of Rebecca, where flesh and spirit, the grace of regeneration and the dregs of corruption, like Jacob and Esau, are striving and wrestling. Paul felt the law of the spirit, and the law of the flesh, still stirring in him. He was sure of both of them: "I know that in my flesh dwells no good thing." And again, he saith, "We have received the Spirit of God, that we may know those things that are given us of God." St. John knew both: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." There is the confession of sinful corruption; and yet again he saith, "Hereby we know we dyell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." There is the feeling and assurance of spiritual regeneration. "Spiritus sanctus non est scepticus; nec dubia, aut opiniones in cordibus nostris scribit, sed affectiones ipsâ vitâ, et omni experientiâ certiores, et firmiores." (Luther)

IV The question is—who can say? It gives contradiction to Pelagius's assertion, that “any man might say so.” He confesses sometimes that no man is free from sin; but withal he affirms, every man may, if he will, live without sin. Indeed, this proud opinion of Pelagius, that same ἀναμαρτησία, which he so boasts of, that man by his free will might abstain from all sin—it was the root and original of all his heresy. But what saith St. Augustine? If by nature we may be free from sin, then Christ died in vain.

St. Paul tells us of τὸ ἀδύνατον, of the impossibility of fulfilling the law, by reason of our flesh. Not that the law is in itself impossible, but in *hoc statu*, or rather *casu*; as, by our first fall, we are now weakened, so it is impossible. Had we continued in our integrity, the law had been easy; but the case is far otherwise by our sinful infirmity. We do not say the law is impossible, as we say it is impossible for a sound man to fly, but as we say it is impossible for a lame man to run. So that this difficulty, we find, argues not the impossibility of the duty, but the impotency of the party for the performance of it.

But yet, to mend the matter, the Papists tell us, that though by the strength of nature we cannot, yet by the ordinary assistance and supplies of grace we may avoid all sin, fulfil all righteousness, and perform the law to the utmost. But when this doctrine of theirs is brought to the trial, they are found guilty of what the next verse condemns—“they have false weights and false measures to judge by.”

1. They make those no sins against the law, which are sins, and forbidden by the law: as idle speeches, petty pilfering, sudden and passionate swearings, and blasphemies. These, they say, are no mortal sins, nor do they hinder perfection.

2. They make those no duties which are duties, but call them counsels only, which do not oblige us “to love our enemies;” it is no duty with them, but a supererogation; a man, they say, is not bound to it. No; let us seriously consider what David saith: “Thy law is exceeding broad.” There are two dimensions in it:—

(1.) The first is the *maximum quod sic*—that is, the extension and largeness of what is commanded—that is, *toto corde*: we must obey with all our heart, with all our strength; that takes in all sorts of good works, and makes them necessary. And then there is—

(2.) A second dimension, that is, *minimum quod non*; the strictness of everything that is forbidden—that is, *non concupisces*, thou shalt not lust. That forbids all evil motions, and makes them mortal sins; the highest perfections are necessary duties; the smallest infirmities are sinful transgressions. Bring thine

actions to this standard and trial, and thou wilt be found *minus habens*, far short of perfection.

V The question is, “Who can say, I have made my heart clean?” It is not said, “Who can say, I have kept my heart clean?” And so the question reflects upon our original corruption. We brought with us unclean hearts into the world, stained and defiled with our original pollution; and it is that which makes the work of mortification so hard and difficult. We have a sink of sin inbred in us, which can hardly be cleansed; as it is hard drawing and drying up a pond that is fed with a spring. We all set out to sea in a leaking vessel that still lets in water; we must always be pumping. This St. Paul calls *ενπεπισατον ἀμαρτιαν*, the sin that still besets us, and hangs fast upon us. And this makes the cure to be so tedious: as those diseases which are natural and hereditary, like the leprosy of Gehazi’s children, they are much harder to be cured than other casual and incidental maladies; as cloth that is dyed in the wool will hardly be changed from the first tincture. This sin makes us sinners even before we can act or commit sin: as those venomous creatures that have poison bred in them are hateful in their spawn, though they have not been hurtful in any actual mischief. “Quæ crescentia sunt pernitiosa, eadem sunt vitiosa nascentia,” saith the orator. That which is hurtful being grown, is hateful in the brood. These natural propensities to sin, which are inbred in us, they do defile and pollute us.

So then we see the strength of this question. We may safely resolve it into a peremptory assertion, and conclude no man is clear and free from sin. A right believer must acknowledge it; a good Christian, to his grief and sorrow, finds and feels it. It may well pass here for a proverb; it is fitted for every man’s conscience, as Luther said of proverbs, “Experientia, proverbiorum mater:” every man’s experience will prove the truth of it.

A sad question it is, and should be pronounced with a mournful accent; but yet, though it be a question tending to humiliation, yet it is not a question to breed despair. A good Christian, in all this perplexity, may return such answers as may ease his conscience.

1. No man can say that he is pure from sin, but yet this a good Christian can say, “I have obtained of God the pardon of my sin; my peace is made up in heaven with him.” Though I am imperfectly cleansed, yet here is my comfort—I am fully pardoned. This was St. Paul’s comfort when he bemoaned himself for those infirmities that did perplex him: “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that jus-

tifies." He doth not say, it is God that sanctifies, because that work is imperfect ; our sanctification cannot bear us out against God's justice : but here is his comfort—it is God that justifies, that pardons, and acquits us. Christ came not only by water, but by blood ; though the water of sanctification do not perfectly cleanse us, yet the blood of redemption, that shall acquit us. It was the devout Father's joy and comfort, *gloriabor, non quia justus sum, sed quia redemptus sum* : in this I rejoice, not that I am innocent, but that I am redeemed and my sins pardoned.

2. No man can say that he is pure from his sin ; but yet this a good Christian can say—

1. I lament and bewail my sin that sticks so close to me ; I allow not myself the commission of any one sin ; I abhor mine uncleanness in dust and ashes.

2. I strive, and endeavour, and fight against all my corruptions ; I account it not a liberty, but a captivity, to be subject to sin.

3. I have got some victory, and, through the grace of Christ, I have broken the strength and dominion of sin ; sin doth not rule and reign in my mortal body ; I do not yield my members as weapons to sin. If sin be disarmed, the militia is taken from him ; sure, then, his kingdom is broken, and in part subdued.

4. I long for that time when sin shall be abolished : "he that is dead is freed from sin," saith St. Paul. That makes a good Christian think of death with comfort ; then shall I be rid of all my corruptions. Final grace purges out all sin. Sin it leaves us as the unclean spirit left the young man in the Gospel ; it rent him, and tare him, and laid him for dead, and so went out of him. The earthen vessel must be broken in pieces, that is the cleansing of it.

He that can part with that which is dear to him, and willingly embrace that which is most unpleasing to him, that so he may be rid of sin, may well comfort himself against all his corruptions. Now life, that is the sweetest thing to man—death, the most bitter ; but a good Christian will be content to part with life, because it is the time of sin, and to welcome death, because that puts an end to all our sins. If the hatred of sin overcome in us the love of life and horror of death, canst thou say truly, "I will part with life, I will welcome death, that I may cease from sinning and offending my God ?" This resolution may be a great comfort in all our perplexities. It gives an acceptable satisfaction to Solomon's sad question : "Who can say, I have made mine heart clean, I am pure from my sin ?"

DUTY OF CONFESSING OUR SINS.

BY THE VERY REVEREND JOHN DONNE, D.D., DEAN OF ST. PAUL'S.

PSALM XXXII. 5.

I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord ; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

This is the sacrament of confession ; so we may call it in a safe meaning—that is, the mystery of confession ; for true confession is a mysterious act. As there is a mystery of iniquity, so there is a mystery of the kingdom of heaven : and the mystery of the kingdom of heaven is this, that no man comes thither, but in a sort as he is a notorious sinner. One mystery of iniquity is, that in this world, though I multiply sins, yet the judge cannot punish me if I can hide them from other men, though he know them ; but if I confess them, he can, he will, he must. The mystery of the kingdom of heaven is, that only the declaring, the publishing, the notifying, and confessing of my sins, possesses me of the kingdom of heaven. There is a case in which the notoriety of my sins does harm, when my open sinning, or my publishing of my sin, by way of glory in that sin, casts a scandal upon others, and leads them into temptation ; for so, my sin becomes theirs, because they sin my sin by example ; and their sin becomes mine, because I gave the example, and we aggravate one another's sin, and both sin both. But there is a publication of sin that both alleviates, nay, annihilates my sin, and makes him that hates sin, Almighty God, love me the better, for knowing me to be such a sinner, than if I had not told him of it. Therefore do we speak of the mystery of confession ; for it is not delivered in one rule, nor practised in one act.

In this confession of David's, “I acknowledged my sin unto thee,” &c., we shall see more than so; for though our two parts be but the two acts—David's act and God's act, confession and absolution—yet is there more than one single act to be considered in each of them. For, first, in the first, there is a reflected act that David doth upon himself before he come to his confession to God—something David had done before he came to say, “I

will confess," as he did confess, before God forgave the iniquity of his sin. Now that which he did in himself, and which preceded his confession to God, was the *notum feci*, "I acknowledged my sin;" which was not his bringing it to the knowledge of God by way of confession, for (as you see by the method of the Holy Ghost, in the frame of the text) it preceded his purpose of confessing; but it was the taking knowledge of the sin in himself—it was his first quickening and inanimation that grace gave his soul, as the soul gives the child in the mother's womb. And then, in David's act upon himself, follows the *non operui*, "I have not hid mine iniquity," none of mine iniquities, from my own sight; I have displayed to myself, anatomized mine own conscience, left no corner unsearched; I am come to a perfect understanding of my own case. *Non operui*—this is David's act upon himself—the recalling and recollecting of his sins in his own memory; and then, finding the number, the weight, and so the oppression of those sins there, he considers where he may discharge himself of them; and "*Dixi* (says David, which is a word that implies both deliberation and resolution, and execution too), I thought what was best to do, and I resolved upon this, and I did it; *Dixi confitebor*, that I would make a true, full, and hearty confession to God of all those sins;" for such we see the elements and the extent of his confession to be. He will confess *peccata*, "transgressions," sins; neither by an over-tenderness, and diffidence, and scrupulosity, to call things sins that are not so, nor by indulgent flattering and sparing of himself to forbear those things which are truly so. He will confess *peccata*, "sins," and *peccata sua*, "his sins;" first, *sua*, that is, *a se perpetrata*, he will acknowledge them to have proceeded and to have been committed by himself—he will not impute them to any other cause, least of all to God; and then, *sua, non aliena*, he will confess sins that are his own sins, and not meddle with the sins of other men that appertain not to him. This is the subject of his confession—sins, and his sins; and then *peccata sua Domino*, "his sins unto the Lord;" both in that consideration, that all sins are committed against the Lord, and in that also, that confession of all sins is to be made unto the Lord: and, lastly, all this (as St. Jerome reads this text, and so also did our former translation), *adversum se*, "against himself"—that is, without any hope of relief or preparation in himself. He begins to think of his own sinful state, and he proceeds to a particular inquisition upon his own conscience—there is his preparation; then he considers, and thereupon resolves, and thereupon proceeds to confess things that are truly sins; and then all them as his own, without imputing them to others; if they be his own, without

meddling with others; and these to the Lord, against whom all sin is committed, and to whom all confession is to be directed; and all this still against himself, without any hope from himself. All this is in David's action, preparatorily in himself, and then declaratorily towards God, and do but make up our first part.

In the other, which is God's act toward David—the absolution, the remission, the forgiveness—we shall consider, first, the fulness; for it is both of the sin, and the punishment of the sin, for the word imports both, and our two translations have expressed it between them; for that which one translation calls the "iniquity of the sin," the other calls "the punishment." And then we shall consider the seasonableness, the speed, the acceleration of God's mercy in the absolution; for in David it is but *actus inchoatus*, and *actus consummatu* sin God. David did but say, "I will confess," and God forgave the iniquity, and the punishment of his sin. Now as this distribution is paraphrase enough upon the text, so a little larger paraphrase upon every piece of the paraphrase will be as much as will fall into this exercise; for, as you see, the branches are many, and full of fruit, and I can but shake them, and leave every one to gather his own portion, to apply those notes which may most advance his edification.

First, then, in this mystery of confession, we consider David's reflected act, his preparatory act, preceding his confession to God, and transacted in himself; of which the first motion is the *notum feci*—"I acknowledge in myself, I came to a feeling in myself, what my sinful condition was." This is our quickening in our regeneration and second birth; and, till this come, a sin lies as the chaos in the beginning of the creation, before the "Spirit of God had moved upon the face of the waters," dark, and void, and without form. He lies, as we may conceive, out of the authors of natural story, the slime and mud of the river Nile to lie, before the sun-beams strike upon it, which after, by the heat of those beams, produces several shapes and forms of creatures. So till this first beam of grace, which we consider here, strike upon the soul of a sinner, he lies in the mud and slime, in the dregs, and lees, and tartar of his sin. He cannot so much as wish that that sun would shine upon him—he doth not so much as know that there is such a sun that hath that influence and impression. But if this first beam of grace enlighten him to himself, reflect him upon himself, *notum fecit*, as the text says—if it acquaint him with himself, then as the creatures in the creation, then as the new creatures at the Nile, his sins begin to take their forms and their specifications, and they appear to him in their particular true shapes and that which he hath in a general name called pleasure or wantonness, now calls itself, in his conscience, a direct adultery, a direct incest; and that

which he hath called frugality, and providence for family and posterity, tells him plainly, “ My name is Oppression, and I am the spirit of covetousness.” Many times men fall into company, and accompany others to houses of riot and uncleanness, and do not so much as know their sinful companions’ names; nay, they do not so much as know the names of the sins that they commit, nor those circumstances in those sins which vary the very name and nature of the sin.

But then, *oculos, quos culpa claudit, pæna aperit*, those eyes which sin shut, this first beam of grace opens when it comes, and works effectually upon us. Till this season of grace, this sinner is blind to the sun, and deaf to thunder. “ A wild ass that is used to the wilderness, and snuffeth up wind at her pleasure, in her occasion, who can turn her away?” An habitual sinner that doth not stumble, but tumble, as a mighty stone down a hill, in the ways of sin, in his occasion, who can turn him? In his rage of sin, what law can withhold him? But says the prophet there of that wild ass, “ All they that seek her will not weary themselves.” Friends, magistrates, preachers, do but weary themselves, and lose their labour, in endeavouring to reclaim that sinner; “ but in her month they shall find her,” says the prophet—that is, say our expositors, when she is great and unwieldy. Some such month God of his goodness brings upon this sinner; some sickness, some judgment stops him, and then we find him. God, by his ordinance, executed by us, brings him to this *notum feci*, into company with himself, into an acquaintance and conversation with himself, and he sees his sins look with other faces, and he hears his sins speak with other voices, and he finds them to call one another by other names; and when he is thus come to that consideration, “ Lord! how have I mistaken myself: am I, that thought myself, and passed with others, for a sociable, a pleasurable man, and good company—am I a leprous adulterer? is that my name? Am I, who thought myself a frugal man and a good husband—I, whom fathers would recommend to their children, and say, ‘ Mark how he spares, how he grows up, how he gathers’—am I an oppressing extortioner? is that my name? Blessed by thy name, O Lord, that hast brought me to this *notum feci*, to know mine own name, mine own miserable condition.” He will also say, “ May that blessing of thine enlarge itself farther, that as I come to this *notum feci*, to know that I mistook myself all this while, so I may proceed to the *non operui*, to a perfect sifting of my conscience in all corners;” which is David’s second motion in his act of preparation: and our next consideration—“ I acknowledged my sin, and I hid none, disguised none,” *non operui*.

Sometimes the magistrate is informed of an abuse, and yet

proceeds to no further search nor inquisition. This word implies, a sifting of the conscience. He doth not only take knowledge of his sins than when they discover themselves ; of his riot and voluptuousness than when he burns in a fever occasioned by his surfeits ; nor of his licentiousness than when he is under the anguish and smart of corrosives ; nor of his wastefulness and pride than when he is laid in prison for debt. He doth not seek his sins in his belly, nor in his bones, nor in his purse, but in his conscience ; and he unfolds that, rips up that, and enters into the privatest and most remote corners thereof. And there is much more in this negative circumstance, *non operui*, “I hid nothing,” than in the former acknowledgment, *notum feci*, “I took knowledge of my sins.” When they sent to sift John Baptist, whether he were the Christ, because he was willing to give them all satisfaction, he expressed himself so, “ He confessed and denied not, and said, I am not the Christ.” So when Joshua pressed Achæan to confess his trespass, he presses him with this negative addition—“ Show me what thou hast done, and hide it not ;” that is, disguise nothing that belongs to it : for, the better to imprint a confidence and to remove all suspicion, men to their masters, wives to their husbands, will confess something, but yet, *operiunt*, they hide more. Those words, *in multitudine virtutis tue*—through the greatness of thy power thine enemies shall submit. St. Jerome, and the Septuagint before, and Tremellius after, and all that bind themselves to the Hebrew letter, read it thus : *mentientur tibi inimici tui*—when thy power is showed upon them, when thy hand lies upon them, thine enemies will lie unto thee”—they will counterfeit a confession, they will acknowledge some sins, but yet, *operiunt*, they hide, they cover others. Saul, in the defeat of the Amalekites, reserved some of the fattest of the spoil, and being deprehended and reprehended, he said he intended it for sacrifice. Many times men, in great place, abuse their own souls with that imagination or palliation, that they do God good service in some sin, and that they should more hurt the cause of God if they should proceed earnestly to the punishment of those that oppose it, than if they let them alone, and so leave laws unexecuted, and God’s truth endangered. But David’s issue was, *non iniquitas, non operui*, “ I left none iniquity unsearched, I hid none.”

But anything serves us for a cover of sin, even from a net, that every man sees through, to such a cloud of darkness as none but the prince of darkness, that cast that cloud upon us, can see us in it, nor we see ourselves. That we should hide lesser sins with greater, is not so strange ; that in an adultery we should forget the circumstances in it, and the practices to come to it.

But we hide greater sins with lesser ; with a manifold and multiplied throng and cloud of lesser sins, all comes to an indifference, and so we see not great sins. Easiness of conversation in a woman seems no great harm ; adorning themselves, to please those with whom they converse, is not much more ; to hear them whom they are thus willing to please, praise them, and magnify their perfections, is little more than that ; to allow them to sue and solicit for the possession of that which they have so much praised, is not much more neither ; nor will it seem much at last to give them possession of that they sue for ; nay, it will seem a kind of injustice to deny it them. We hide lesser sins with greater—greater with lesser ; nay, we hide the devil with God ; we hide all the week's sins with a Sabbath's solemnity. And as, in the Roman Church, they poisoned God (when they had made their bread God, they poisoned the emperor with that bread), so this is a possessing of God, a making the devil to enter into God, when we hide our sins with an outward sanctity, and call God to witness and testify to the congregation, that we are saints when we are devils ; for this is a suborning of God, and a drawing of God himself into a perjury. We hide our sins in his house by hypocrisyall our lives, and we hide them at our deaths, perchance, with an hospital. And truly we had need do so ; when we have impoverished God, in his children, by our extortions, and wounded him and lamed him, in them, by our oppressions, we had need provide God an hospital. As men that rob houses thrust in a child at the window, and he opens greater doors for them, so lesser sins make way for greater. *De minimis non curat lex*—the law is fain to pass over small faults ; but *De minimis curat lux*—that light of grace, by which a sinner disposes himself to confession, must discover every sin, and hide none, suffer none to hide itself, nor lie hidden under others. When God speaks so much of Behemoth and Leviathan, the great land and sea oppressors, he calls us to the consideration of the insupportableness of great sins ; but in the plains of Egypt, by hail, and locusts, and lice, little and contemptible things, he calls us to the consideration of these vermin of the soul, lesser and unconsidered sins. David had not accomplished his work upon himself, his reflected, his preparatory act, till he had made both those steps, *notum feci, non operui*—“first, I took knowledge of my sinful condition, and then I proceeded to a particular inquisition of my conscience ; I took knowledge of my sin, and mine iniquity I have not hid :” and then he was fit to think of an access to God by confession, *Dixi confitebor, &c.*

This word, *dixi*, “ I said,” is a word that implies, first, meditation, deliberation, considering ; and then, upon such medi-

tation, a resolution too, and execution after all. When it is said of God, *dixit* and *dixit*, God said this and said that in the first creation, *Cave ne cogites strepitum*, do not think that God uttered any sound: his speaking was inward; his speaking was thinking. So David uses this word in the person of another, *dixit insipiens*: “The fool hath said,” that is, *in corde*, “said in his heart,” that is, thought, “that there is no God.” There speaking is thinking, and speaking is resolving too. So David’s son Solomon uses the word, “Behold I purpose to build a house unto the Lord;” where the word is, “I say I will do it;” speaking is determining, and speaking is executing too. *Dixi custodiam*, “I said I will take heed to my ways,” that is, I will proceed and go forward in the paths of God. And such a premeditation, such a preconsideration, do all our approaches and accesses to God, and all our acts in his service, require. God is the rock of our salvation; God is no occasional God, no accidental God; neither will God be served by occasion, nor by accident, but by a constant devotion. Our communications with God must not be in interjections, that come in by chance; nor our devotions made up of parentheses, that might be left out. They err equally that make a God of necessity, and that make a God of contingency—they that, with the Manichees, make an ill God, a God that forces men to do all the ill that they do; and they that, with the Epicures, make an idle God, an indifferent God, that cares not what is done. God is not destiny; then there could be no reward nor punishment. But God is not fortune neither; for then there were no providence. If God have given reason only to man, it were strange that man should exercise that reason in all his moral and civil actions, and only do the acts of God’s worship casually. To go to Court, to Westminster, to the Exchange for ends, and to come to Church by chance, or for company, or for some collateral respects that have no relation to God—not to think of our confession till the priest have called upon us to say after him, “We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep”—to come for absolution, as Nebuchadnezzar came to Daniel for the interpretation of his dream, who did not only not understand his dream, but not remember it, *sonnum ejus fugit ab eo*, he did not only not know what his dream meant, but he did not know what his dream was—not to consider the nature of confession and absolution—not to consider the nature of the sins we should confess and be absolved of, is a stupidity against David’s practice here; *dixit*, “he said,” he meditated, he considered, God’s service is no extemporal thing. But then *dixit*, “he resolved too,” for so the word signifies; consideration, but resolution upon it; and then, that he resolved, he executed.

This is not only David's *dixit in corde*, where speaking is thinking—nor only Solomon's *dixi aedificabo*, “I resolved how I might build” but it is also the prodigal's *dixi revertar*, “I will go to my father;” a resolving and executing of that resolution for that, that execution crowns all. How many think to come hither when they wake, and are not ready when the hour comes? And even this morning's omission is an abridgement or an essay of their whole lives; they think to repent every day, and are not ready when the bell tolls. It is well said of God's speaking in the creation, it was *dictio practica, diffinitiva, imperativa*; it was an actual speaking, a definitive, an imperative speaking; and *dicto absolvit negotium*, his saying he would do it—that is, his meaning to do it was the very doing of it. Our religious duties require meditations, for God is no extemporal God. Those produce determinations, for God must not be held in suspense; and they flow into executions, for God is not an illusible God, to be carried with promises or purposes only; and all those links of this religious chain—consideration, resolution, execution, thought, word, and practice—are made out of this golden word, *amar*, *dixi*, “I said I will do it;” and then, *dixi confitebor*, “I considered that my best way was to confess, and I resolved to do so, and I did it,” *dixi confitebor*.

It is but a homely metaphor, but it is a wholesome and a useful one, *confessio vomitus*, “confession works as a vomit;” it shakes the frame, and it breaks the bed of sin, and it is an ease to the spiritual stomach, to the conscience, to be thereby disburdened. It is an ease to the sinner, to the patient; but that which makes it absolutely necessary is, that it is a glory to God; for in all my spiritual actions, appreciations, or deprecations, whether I pray for benefits, or against calamities, still my Alpha and Omega, my first and last motive must be the glory of God. Therefore Joshua says to Achan, “My son, give, I pray thee, glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him.” Now the glory of God arises not out of the confessing, but because every true confessing is accompanied with a detestation of the sin; as it hath separated me from God, and a sense of my re-union and reintegration with God, in the abjuration of my former sins: (for to tell my sin by way of a good tale, or by boasting in it, though it be a revealing, a manifesting, is not a confession). In every true confession God hath glory, because he hath a strayed soul re-united to his kingdom. And to advance this glory, David confesses *peccata*, “sins;” which is our next consideration, I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord.”

First, he resents his state, “all is not well;” then he examines himself, “thus and thus it stands with me;” then he con-

siders, then he resolves, then he executes—he confesses (so far we are gone), and now he confesses sins. For the Pharisee, though he pretended a confession, was rather an exprobation, how much God had been beholden to him for his sabbaths, for his alms, for his tithes, for his fasting. David confesses sins ; first, such things as were truly sins. For as the element of air, that lies between the water and the fire, is sometimes condensed into water, sometimes rarified into fire, so lies the conscience of it, man between two operations of the devil ; sometimes he rarifies evaporates it, that it apprehends nothing, feels nothing to be sin ; sometimes he condenses it, that everything falls and sticks upon it, in the nature, and takes the weight of sin ; and he misinterprets the indifferent actions of others, and of his own, and destroys all use of Christian liberty, all conversation, all recreation ; and, out of a false fear of being undutiful to God, is unjust to all the world and to his own soul, and consequently to God himself, who, of all notions, would not be received in the notion of a cruel or tyrannical God. In an obdurate conscience, that feels no sin, the devil glories most ; but in the over-tender conscience he practices most: that is his triumphant, but this is his militant Church—that is his Sabbath, but this is his six days' labour. In the obdurate he hath indeed a security ; in the scrupulous and over-tender he is working for desperation. There are few things in the Scriptures which the Holy Ghost hath expressed in so many names as sin: sin, wickedness, iniquity, transgressions, offences—many, many more: and all this, that thereby we might reflect upon ourselves often, and see if our particular actions fell not under some of those names. But then, lest this should over-intimidate us, there are as many names given by the Holy Ghost to the laws of God : law, statutes, ordinances, covenants, testimony, precept, and all the rest, of which there is some one at least repeated in every verse of the 119th Psalm, that thereby we might still have a rule to measure and try our actions by, whether they be sins or no. For, as the apostle says, “ he had not known sin, if he had not known the law ;” so there had been no sin if there had been no law. And therefore that soul that feels itself oppressed under the burden of a vow, must have recourse to the law of God, and see whether that vow fall under the rule of that law ; for as an over-tender conscience may call things sins that are not, and so be afraid of things that never were, so may it also of things that were, but are not now ; of such sins as were truly sins, and fearful sins, but are now dead—dead by a true repentance, and buried in the sea of the blood of Christ Jesus, and sealed up in that monument under the seal of reconciliation, the blessed sacrament, and yet rise sometimes in this tender conscience, in a suspicion and jealousy that God hath not truly,

not fully forgiven them. And as a ghost, which we think we see, affrights us more than an army that we do see, so these apparitions of sins, of things that are not against any law of God, and so are not sins, or sins that are dead in a true repentance, and so have no being at all, by the devil's practice, work dangerously upon a distempered conscience ; for as God hath given the soul an imagination and a fancy, as well as an understanding, so the devil imprints in the conscience a false imagination as well as a fearful sense of true sin. David confesses sins, sins that were truly sins.

But the more ordinary danger is in our not calling those things, which are truly sins, by that name. For as sometimes, when the baptism of a child is deferred for state, the child dies unbaptized; so the sinner defers the baptism of his sin in his tears, and in the blood of his Saviour, offered in the blessed sacrament, till he die nameless, nameless in the book of life. It is a character that one of the ancientest poets gives of a well-bred and well-governed gentleman, that he would not tell such lies as were like truths, not probable lies ; nor such truths as were like lies, not wonderful, not incredible truths. It is the constancy of a rectified Christian not to call his indifferent actions sins, for that is to slander God as a cruel God ; nor to call sins indifferent actions, for that is to undervalue God as a negligent God. God doth not keep the conscience of man upon the rack, in a continual torture and stretching ; but God doth not stupify the conscience with an opiate, in an insensibleness of any sin. The law of God is the balance, and the *criterium*. By that try thine actions, and then confess. David did so ; *peccata*, he confessed sins ; nothing that was not so as such ; neither omitted he anything that was so. And then they were *peccata sua*, his sins—“ I said, I will confess my sins unto the Lord.”

First, *sua*, his sins ; that is, *à se perpetrata*, sins which he confesses to have been of his voluntary committing ; he might and did not avoid them. When Adam said, by way of alienation and transferring his fault, “ The woman whom thou gavest me ;” and the woman said, “ The serpent deceived me ;” God took this by way of information to find out the principal, but not by way of extenuation or alleviation of their faults. Every Adam eats with as much sweat of his brows, and every Eve brings forth her children with as much pain in her travail, as if there had been no serpent in the case. If a man sin against God, who shall plead for him ? If a man lay his sins upon the serpent, upon the devil, it is no plea ; but if he lay them upon God, it is blasphemy. Job finds some ground of a pious expostulation with God, in that, “ My flesh is not brass, nor my strength stones ; and such as I am, thou hast made me : why then dost thou set

me up as a mark to shoot at?" But Job never hopes for ease in any such allegation; "Thou hast made my soul a cistern, and then poured temptations into it; thou hast enfeebled it with denying it thy grace, and then put a giant, a necessity of sinning, upon it. My sins are mine own; the sun is no cause of the shadow my body casts, nor God of the sins I commit." David confesses his sins; that is, he confesses them to be his; and then he confesses *his*—he meddles not with those that are other men's.

The magistrate and the minister are bound to consider the sins of others; for their sins become, *quodammodo nostra*, in some sort ours, if we do not reprove, if the magistrate do not correct those sins. All men are bound to confess and lament the sins of the people. It was then when Daniel was in that exercise of his devotion, confessing his sin and the sin of the people, that he received that comfort from the angel Gabriel. And yet, even then, the first thing that fell under his confession was his own sin "my sin;" and then, "the sin of my people." When Joseph's brethren came to a sense of that sin in having sold him, none of them transfers the sin from himself, neither do any of them discharge any of the rest of that sin. They all take all; "They said to one another (says that text), we," all we, "are verily guilty, and therefore is this distress come upon us," upon us all. National calamities are induced by general sins, and where they fall, we cannot so charge the laity as to free the clergy, nor so charge the people as to free the magistrate. But as great sums are raised by little personal contributions, so a little true sorrow from every soul would make a great sacrifice to God, and a few tears from every eye, a deeper and a safer sea about this island, than that that doth wall it. Let us, therefore, never say that it is *aliena ambitio*, the immoderate ambition of a pretending monarch that endangers us; that is it *aliena perfidia*, the falsehood of perfidious neighbours that hath disappointed us; that it is *aliena fortuna*, the growth of others who have shot up under our shelter that may overtop us. They are *peccata nostra*, our own pride, our own wantonness, our own drunkenness, that makes God shut and close his hand towards us, withdraw his former blessings from us, and then strike us with that shut, and closed, and heavy hand, and multiply calamities upon us. What a parliament meets at this hour in this kingdom? How many such committees as this? How many such congregations stand, as we do here, in the presence of God, at this hour? And what a subsidy should this state receive, and what a sacrifice should God receive, if every particular man would but depart with his own beloved sin? We dispute what is our own, as though we would but know what to give. Alas, our sins are our own; let us

give them. Our sins are our own—that we confess ; and we confess them according to David's method, *Domino*, to the Lord, “ I will confess my sins to the Lord.”

After he had deliberated and resolved upon his course, what he would do, he never stayed upon the person to whom. His way being confession, he stayed not long in seeking his ghostly father, his confessor, *confitebor Domino* ; and, first, *peccata Domino*, that his sins were sins against the Lord. For as every sin is a violation of a law, so every violation of a law reflects upon the law-maker. It is the same offence to coin a penny and a piece ; the same to counterfeit the seal of a subpœna as of a pardon. The second table was writ by the hand of God, as well as the first ; and the majesty of God, as he is the law-giver, is wounded in an adultery and a theft, as well as in an idolatry or a blasphemy. It is not enough to consider the deformity and the foulness of an action, so as that an honest man would not have done it ; but so as it violates a law of God, and his majesty in that law. The shame of men is one bridle that is cast upon us. It is a moral obduration, and in the suburbs—next door to a spiritual obduration—to be voice-proof, censure-proof—not to be afraid nor ashamed what the world says. He that relies upon his *plaudo domi*, though the world hiss, I give myself a plaudit at home ; I have him at my table, and her in my bed, whom I would have, and I care not for rumour ; he that rests in such a plaudit, prepares for a tragedy—a tragedy in the amphitheatre, the double theatre, this world and the next too. Even the shame of the world should be one bridle, but the strongest is the other, *peccata Domino*, to consider that every sin is a violation of the majesty of God.

And then *confitebor Domino*, says David—“I will confess my sins to the Lord.” Sins are not confessed if they be not confessed to him ; and if they be confessed to him, in case of necessity it will suffice, though they be confessed to no other. Indeed, a confession is directed upon God, though it be made to his minister. If God had appointed his angels or his saints to absolve me, as he hath his ministers, I would confess to them. Joshua took not the jurisdiction out of God's hands, when he said to Achan, “ Give glory unto the God of Israel, in making thy confession to him : and tell me now what thou hast done, and hide it not from me.” The law of the leper is, “ that he shall be brought unto the priest.” Men come not willingly to this manifestation of themselves ; nor are they to be brought in chains, as they do in the Roman Church, by a necessity of an exact enumeration of all their sins ; but to be led with that sweetness with which our Church proceeds, in appointing sick

persons, if they feel their consciences troubled with any weighty matter, to make a special confession, and to receive absolution at the hands of the priest. And then to be remembered, that every coming to the communion is as serious a thing as our transmigration out of this world; and we should do as much here for the settling of our conscience, as upon our death-bed. And to be remembered also, that none of all the Reformed Churches have forbidden confession, though some practice it less than others. If I submit a cause to the arbitrament of any man to end it, *secundum voluntatem*, says the law—how he will, yet still *arbitrium est arbitrium boni viri*—his will must be regulated by the rules of common honesty and general equity. So when we lead men to this holy ease of discharging their heavy spirits by such private confessions, yet this is still limited by the law of God, so far as God hath instituted this power by his Gospel in his Church, and far from inducing amongst us that torture of the conscience, that usurpation of God's power, that spying into the counsels of princes, and supplanting of their purposes, with which the Church of Rome hath been deeply charged.

And this useful and unmisinterpretable confession which we speak of, is the more recommended to us, in that with which David shuts up his act (as out of St. Jerome, and out of our former translation, we intimated unto you), that he doth all this *adversum se*, “I will confess my sins unto the Lord against myself.” The more I find confession, or any religious practice, to be against myself, and repugnant to mine own nature, the farther I will go in it: for still the *adversum me*, is *cum Deo*. The more I say against myself, the more I vilify myself, the more I glorify my God. As St. Chrysostom says, every man is *spontaneus Satan*—a Satan to himself; as Satan is a tempter, every man can tempt himself: so I will be *spontaneus Satan*: as Satan is an accuser—an adversary, I will accuse myself. I consider often that passionate humiliation of St. Peter, “*Exi à me, Domine*”—“He fell at Jesu's knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” And I am often ready to say so, and more; depart from me, O Lord, for I am sinful enough to infect thee; as I may persecute thee in thy children, so I may infect thee in thine ordinances; depart, in withdrawing thy word from me, for I am corrupt enough to make even thy saving Gospel the savour of death unto death; depart, in withholding thy sacrament, for I am leprous enough to taint thy flesh, and to make the balm of thy blood poison to my soul; depart, in withdrawing the protection of thine angels from me, for I am vicious enough to imprint corruption and rebellion into their nature. And if I be too foul for God himself to come near

me—for his ordinances to work upon me, I am no companion for myself, I must not be alone with myself; for I am as apt to take, as to give infection: I am a reciprocal plague—passively and actively contagious; I breathe corruption, and breathe it upon myself; and I am the Babylon that I must go out of, or I perish. I am not only under Jacob's *non dignus*, “Not worthy the least of all thy mercies;” nor only under the centurion's *non dignus*, “I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof,” that thy Spirit should ever speak to my spirit—which was the form of words in which every communicant received the sacrament in the primitive Church: “Lord I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; nor only under the prodigal's *non dignus*, “Not worthy to be called thy Son;” neither in the filiation of adoption, for I have deserved to be disinherited; not in the filiation of creation, for I have deserved to be annihilated: but *non dignus procumbere*, I am not worthy to stoop down, to fall down, to kneel before thee, in thy minister, the almoner of thy mercy, the treasures of thine absolutions. So far do I confess *adversum me*, against myself, as that I confess I am not worthy to confess, nor to be admitted to any access, any approach to thee, much less to an act so near reconciliation to thee as an accusation of myself, or so near thy acquitting as a self-condemning. Be this the issue in all controversies, whosoever any new opinions distract us. Be that still thought best that is most *adversum nos*—most against ourselves. That that most lays flat the nature of man, so it take it not quite away and blast all virtuous endeavours: that that most exalts the grace and glory of God, be that the truth. And so have you the whole mystery of David's confession in both his acts, preparatory in resenting his sinful condition in general, and surveying his conscience in particular. And then his deliberation, his resolution, his execution, his confession; confession of true sins, and of them only; and of all them of his sins, and all this to the Lord, and all that against himself. That which was proposed for the second part must fall into the compass of a conclusion, and a short one—that is, God's act: “Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.”

This is a wide door, and would let out armies of instructions to you; but we will shut up this door with these two leaves thereof: the fulness of God's mercy, “He forgives the sin and the punishment;” and the seasonableness, the acceleration of his mercy in this expression in our text, that David's is but *actus inchoatus*; he says “He will confess;” and God's is *actus consummatus*, “Thou forgavest”—thou hadst already forgiven the iniquity and punishment of my sin. These will be the two leaves of this

door ; and let the hand that shuts them be this *and*—this particle of connection which we have in the text, “ I said, and thou didst.” For though this remission of sin be not presented here as an effect upon that cause of David’s confession—it is not delivered in a *quia* and an *ergo*, because David did this, God did that ; for man’s will leads not the will of God as a cause, who does all his acts of mercy for his mercy’s sake—yet though it be not an effect, as from a cause, yet it is at least as a consequent from an occasion, so assured, so infallible, as let any man confess as David did, and he shall sure to be forgiven as David was. For though this forgiveness be a flower of mercy, yet the root grows in the justice of God : “ If we acknowledge our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin.” It grows out of his faithfulness, as he hath vouchsafed to bind himself by a promise ; and out of his justice, as he hath received a full satisfaction for all our sins. So that this hand—this *and* in our text—is as a ligament, as a sinew, to connect and knit together that glorious body of God’s preventing grace, and his subsequent grace ; if our confession come between and tie the knot, God, that moved us to that act, will perfect all.

Here enters the fulness of his mercy at one leaf of this door ; well expressed at our door, in that *Ecce sto et pulso*—“ Behold, I stand at the door and knock :” for, first, he comes ; here is no mention of our calling of him before : he comes of himself. And then he suffers not us to be ignorant of his coming ; he comes so as that he manifests himself—*Ecce*, Behold. And then he expects not that we should wake with that light, and look out of ourselves ; but he knocks, solicits us, at least, with some noise at our doors, some calamities upon our neighbours. And, again, he appears not like a lightning that passes away as soon as it is seen, that no man can read by it, nor work by it, nor light a candle, nor kindle a coal by it, but he stands at the door and expects us all day ; not only with a patience, but with a hunger, to effect his purpose upon us, he would come in and sup with us, accept our diet, our poor endeavours. And then would have us sup with him (as it is there added), would feast us with his abundant graces, which he brings even home to our doors. But those he does not give us at the door, not till we have let him in, by the good use of his former grace. And as he offers this fulness of his mercy by these means before, so by way of pardon and remission, if we have been defective in opening the door upon his standing and knocking, this fulness is fully expressed in this word of this text, as our two translations (neither departing from the natural signification of the word) have rendered it.

The word is the same here, in David's sweetness, as in Cain's bitterness: and we cannot tell whether Cain speaks there of a punishment too great to be borne, or of a sin too great to be pardoned; nor which David means here. It fills up the measure of God's mercy, if we take him to mean both. God, upon confession, forgives the punishment of the sin: so that the just terror of hell, and the imaginary terror of purgatory, for the next world, is taken away; and for this world, what calamities and tribulations soever fall upon us, after these confessions and remissions, they have not the nature of punishments, but they are fatherly corrections and medicinal assistances against relapses, and have their main relation and prospect upon the future.

For not only the sin itself, but the iniquity of the sin, is said to be forgiven. God keeps nothing in his mind against the last day. But whatsoever is worst in the sin, the venom, the malignity of the sin, the violation of his law, the affrontings of his majesty residing in that law; though it have been a winking at his light, a resisting of his light, the ill-nature, the malignity, the iniquity of the sin is forgiven. Only this remains, that God extinguishes not the right of a third person, nor pardons a murderer, so as that he bars another from his appeal. Not that his pardon is not full, upon a full confession; but that the confession is no more full, if it be not accompanied with satisfaction—that is, restitution of all unjustly gotten—than if the confession lacked contrition and true sorrow. Otherwise the iniquity of the sin and the punishment of the sin are both fully pardoned. And so we have shut one leaf of this door, the fulness; the other is the speed and acceleration of his mercy, and that leaf we will clap to in a word.

This is expressed in this—David is but at his *dixit*, and God at his *remisit*: David was but saying, nay, but thinking; and God was doing, nay, perfecting his work. To the lepers that cried out for mercy, Christ said, “Go show yourselves to the priest:” so he put them into the way, and they went (says the text), “and as they went they were healed upon the way.” No man comes into the way but by the illumination and direction of God; Christ put them into the way. The way is the Church: no man is cured out of the way; no man that separates himself from the Church; nor in the way neither, except he go; if he live negligently, and trust only upon the outward profession: nor though he go, except he go according to Christ's bidding; except he conform himself to that worship of God, and to those means of sanctification, which God hath instituted in his Church, without singularities of his own, or traditions of other men's in-

venting and imposing. This, this submitting and conforming ourselves to God, so as God hath commanded us, the purposing of this, and the endeavouring of this, is our *dixit* in the text, our saying that we will do it; and upon this *dixit*, this purposing, this endeavouring, instantly, immediately, infallibly follows the *remisit*. God will, God does, God hath forgiven the iniquity, and the punishment of the sin.

Therefore, to end all, “Pour out thy heart like water before the face of the Lord.” No liquor coines so clearly, so absolutely from the vessel—not oil, not milk, not wine, not honey—as that it leaves no taste behind; so may sweet sins: and, therefore, pour out, says the prophet, not the liquor, but the heart itself, and take a new heart of God’s making; for thy former heart was never so of God’s making, as that Adam had not a hand in it; and his image was in it, in original sin, as well as God’s in the creation. As liquors poured out leave a taste and a smell behind them, unperfected confessions (and who perfects his confession?) leave ill-gotten goods sticking upon thine hair, and they leave a taste and a delight to think and speak of former sins sticking upon thyself. But “pour out thy heart like water;” all ill impressions in the very root. And for the accomplishment of this great mystery of godliness by confession, fix thy meditations upon those words, and in the strength of them come now (or when thou shalt be better strengthened by the meditation of them) to the table of the Lord. The Lord looketh upon men, and if any say, “I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not,” he will deliver his soul from going down into the pit, and his life shall see light. And it is added, “Lo, all these things worketh God twice and thrice.” Here is a fulness of consolation—first, plenary; and here is a present forgiveness. If man, if any man say, “I have sinned,” God doth, God forgives. And here is more than that, an iteration: if thou fall upon infirmity again, God will, on penitence more carefully performed, forgive again. This he will do twice or thrice, says the Hebrew; our translation might boldly say, as it doth, “This God will do often.” But yet if God find *dolum in spiritu*, an over confidence in this, God cannot be mocked. And, therefore, take heed of trusting upon it too often, but especially of trusting upon it too late. And whatsoever the Holy Ghost may mean by the twice or thrice, be sure to do it once: do it now, and receive thy Saviour there; and so as he offers himself unto thee in these his ordinances this day, once, and twice, and thrice—that is, in prayer, in preaching, in the sacrament. For this is thy trinity upon earth, that must bring thee to the Trinity in heaven.

THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS.

BY THE REV. THOMAS GATAKER, B.D.

MARK xiii. 37.—*Watch.*

THERE be two cominges of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ mentioned in Scripture—the former of them in mercy, to save the world; the latter of them in majesty, to judge the world. Some of those that lived in the time of the former had moved the question to our Saviour himself concerning the latter, “When will the coming of the Son of Man be?”

Now our Saviour, in way of answer unto this question, layeth down both the certainty and the uncertainty of his second coming—the certainty that it shall be, the uncertainty when it shall be: that which is wont to be said of the day of death being no less true of the day of doom—“There is nothing more certain, and yet nothing more uncertain.” Nothing more certain than that it shall be; “as sure (we used to say) as death,” and may well say, “as doom:” for “heaven and earth (saith our Saviour) shall pass away, but so shall not my word.” And yet nothing more uncertain than when it shall be: for “of that day and hour knoweth no man aught; no, nor the angels in heaven, nor the Son (as he was then) himself.”

Hereupon he taketh occasion to exhort his disciples, whom he then spake to, and us all in and by them, unto circumspection and wariness, unto vigilance and watchfulness: that since such a day must once come, and they know not how soon it may come, wherein they shall all be called to give up their accounts, that therefore they live in a continual expectation of it—in a perpetual preparation for it, that, whensoever it shall come, they may be found ready and fit for it.

Which exhortation having urged and enlarged by sundry arguments of enforcement and illustration, in the words before going, he doth here repeat and conclude, winding up the sum of all before delivered in this one word—“Watch:” a word not consisting of many syllables or letters, but containing much matter, and matter of much use; which, that it may the better and the more orderly be unfolded, we will refer all that shall be

spoken to these four heads: the sense, the proofs, the manuer, and the means; or—

1. The meaning of the word, what it is to watch.
2. The reasons why we ought so to watch.
3. The manner how we must watch.
4. The means whereby we may watch.

The two former belong to doctrine; the two latter to life.

For the first of them—to wit, what it is to watch. Watching is, to speak properly, an affection of the body, and is, by way of metaphor only, applied unto the soul: in regard whereof it will not be amiss to consider briefly what it importeth in the one, that we may the better conceive thereby what it signifieth in the other.

Watching, therefore, and waking, are two several things: it is one thing to wake, or to be awake, and another thing to watch. For example: we are all here, I presume, at this present waking, but cannot properly be said to be watching, because neither is it now the ordinary time of rest, neither, it may be, have we any present inclination thereunto. But the disciples of our Saviour, the night before he suffered, are said to have watched with him: “Could ye not watch an hour with me?” because both it was then the ordinary time of repose, and they very sleepy and drowsy also themselves. Again, the psalmist complaineth that God “held his eyes waking,” or watching, but in an improper sense; that he was forced to keep waking, and so in some sort to watch, as it were, against his will. A man lieth oft awake when he would fain sleep, but cannot, either through disease of body or distraction of mind; and a man that is set to watch may keep awake, but not mind or regard his charge: and neither of them, in such case, are said properly to watch. But those that sit by such a sick man as cannot sleep, to tend him, are said to watch by him: and the shepherds are said to have been “watching over their flocks” when the angel appeared to them that brought them tidings of Christ’s birth. So that bodily watching, to speak properly and precisely, is then when a man striveth to keep himself corporally waking, for the tending or heeding of something, at such time as he is or may be inclining to sleep.

But it is no such bodily watching that is here intended. A man may not watch thus that keepeth himself so awake; and a man may not keep himself so awake, and yet watch. Peter watched thus while he slept in the prison between two soldiers, tied fast with two chains: and so did David, when, trusting to God’s gracious protection, he laid himself quietly down to sleep. Whereas, on the other side, Judas sat up all the night long (as

thieves and murderers also do many times) to put his treason in practice, while his fellow disciples slept ; and yet watched he no more, nay, not so much as they did. And David was broad awake when he espied Bathsheba from off his terrace ; and yet watched he not so well as before he did, when on his pallet he lay fast asleep : he rose from one sleep to fall into another, a worse sleep. It is not a corporal, but a spiritual—not a proper, but a figurative, a metaphorical watching (and yet a watching that hath reference to that proper, some resemblance of that corporal, watching), that our Saviour here intendeth.

To apply, therefore, what was before said of watching, to the soul, and so to our present purpose. Sin is, in the word, compared to a sleep : “Let not us sleep as others sleep (saith the apostle) ; for those that sleep, sleep in the night :” and, “We are not of the night, but of the light and of the day.” He speaketh as of a spiritual night of ignorance, so of a spiritual sleep of sin. Repentance is said to be an awaking, as it were, out of this sleep. “Awake to righteousness, and sin not,” saith the same apostle. And again, “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead (from the deadly sleep of sin), and Christ will enlighten thee.” And, “As it is a sign that a man is awaked out of his sleep when he telleth what dreams he saw in his sleep, so it is a sign (saith the heathen man) of one truly repentant when a man maketh sincere confession of his former offence. And, lastly, the striving to keep ourselves from future relapse, and from falling back into this our former deadly slumber again, is that which, by the same metaphor, is termed watching, as here, so elsewhere.

So that it is as much, in effect, as if our Saviour had said, when he willeth us to watch, that it is not sufficient for us that we have been awaked out of the deadly sleep of sin, but we must, with all heedful diligence for the time to come, strive to keep ourselves thus waking. Watch we cannot till we be awake ; and, when we are once awaked, we must ever watch. And so have we both the true sense and signification of the word, and the point also therein propounded.

Now the reasons of this point may be four : the first taken from the drowsiness of our own natural disposition ; the second, from the diligence of our adversary, the devil ; the third, from the necessity of perseverance ; the fourth and last, from the danger of relapse.

For the first of them—to wit, the drowsiness of our own natural disposition. “He came the second time (saith the evangelist, of our Saviour’s disciples, whom he had but lately before awaked), and found them asleep again ; for their eyes were

heavy." And as it is with those that be of a heavy constitution, of a drowsy disposition, that though they be awaked out of sleep, yet, unless they use some diligence (yea, though they so do) to keep themselves awake, they are ready ever and anon to be napping and nodding, and, if they be not the more careful, to fall even fast asleep again; so it is naturally with every one of us in regard of our souls. We are all generally of a very dull and drowsy disposition, by reason of that lumpish flesh of ours, that abideth much even in the best of us: by means whereof it cometh to pass that we are oft sleeping and slumbering, be we never so careful and diligent; yea, in danger oft, after we have been awaked out of this dreary and deadly sleep, to fall soon back again into the same, if we keep not a constant watch over ourselves and our souls. Beside that, the devil is ready and busy ever to help forward, besprinkling of our temples with his spiritual opium of evil motions and suggestions, to further the matter, and to cast us again, if it be possible, into a lethargy irrecoverable.

A second reason, therefore, may be taken from the diligence of this our adversary. "Be sober and watch (saith the apostle), for your adversary, the devil, goeth about continually, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." "Shall men watch (saith the heathen man) to slay and destroy others? and wilt not thou watch to save thyself?" So say I. Shall Satan be more vigilant in watching to do us a shrewd turn or a mischief, than we in watching to keep ourselves safe from his malice? Undoubtedly, if he watch thus continually to assault us, unless we watch as constantly on the other side to prevent him, we shall soon come to be surprised and vanquished again of him. Continual watch, therefore, is to be held of us, because our enemy continually lies in wait for us: nor can we ever, in regard thereof, be we never so watchful, be over-much wary; yea, or wary enough;—a thing the rather to be regarded, because it is not here as in bodily or in worldly watch and ward, where some watch for the rest, and the rest sleep while they wake: as that Greek commander sometimes said in a general solemnity, that he "kept sober and watched, that others the whilst might drink and sleep." And Philip of Macedon used to say, that he "might safely drink deep, as long as Antipater kept sober and watched." But it is not so in this spiritual watch: we cannot here watch by deputy; no man can watch for us; but every one must watch for himself.

"But (may some say) are not the ministers of God in the word called watchmen? and are they not said to watch for our souls?"

I answer, true it is, indeed, they are called watchmen, and they are said to watch, yet not so much for as over your souls. Now it is one thing to watch for one, and another thing to watch over one. To watch for one, to speak properly, is to watch in his stead, that he may not watch: as in a city besieged, or in a set camp, some few watch by night, in their turns, that the rest the whilst may sleep; and as the prince is said to watch, that the subject may rest at ease; or the prince's guard to watch, that he may sleep safely. But to watch over one is to watch by him, to keep him awake: as those that watch deer to tame them, by keeping them from sleep; or as those that tend a sick patient in some drowsy disease, or after some medicine received, or a vein opened, or the like, where sleep may be prejudicial and dangerous unto him. In this latter manner are we said to watch over you, and the main end of our watching is to keep you waking; which, unless it be therefore by our watching effected, all our watching in regard of you is to no purpose, no more than their watching about the patient before spoken of, if he sleep amidst them while they watch about him. The pastor, then, indeed, must watch over his people; but the people must watch also with their pastor, and must be kept waking by his watching: yea, as he must watch over both himself and them, so must they in person also watch each one over himself. To which purpose, if we should demand of our Saviour, as Peter did sometime in the very same case, and upon the like occasion, "Master, speakest thou this unto us alone, or unto all?"—Dost thou speak this to thine apostles only, or to pastors alone that are to watch over others, or to the people also, to thy disciples all in general?—our Saviour would no doubt answer, yea, so expressly he doth answer, "What I say unto you, I say unto all—Watch." Others may watch over us, but none can watch for us; each one in person must ever watch for himself.

To the adversary before mentioned we might well add another, no less dangerous than the former—to wit, the world, as Aaron saith of his people, "wholly set upon wickedness." This, though we be not of it, yet are we in it, neither can we go or get out of it when we will ourselves; we must stay in it till it please God to call us out of it: and so long as we are in it, "we tread upon embers, we walk among snares," of evil example, of allurement by profit and pleasure, of shame and abashment by derision, scorn, and contempt, and of terror and affrightment by opposition, threats, and discountenance, if we do not as others do. We are in as much danger (if not much more) by evil men as by devils—by devils incarnate as by devils indeed; they are limbs of the devil, and the instruments that he ofttest maketh

use of. We are more in danger of wicked men for our souls, than they are for the bodies that live in the wide wilderness, where wild beasts are most frequent. They were men like themselves that our Saviour warned his disciples to beware of, when he said, "Take ye heed of men;" for they are they that may do you most mischief. They were men-wolves that he forewarned them of, when he told them that he should send them out "as sheep among wolves." And had they not need to walk warily that have so many snares in their way? Had they not need to stand continually upon their guard that have their enemies on either side, nay, on every side of them? Have they not just cause to watch night and day that abide there where lions, wolves, and wild beasts of ravenous disposition are most rife?

But there is yet a third enemy, as vigilant and diligent, yea, more incessant and more dangerous, than either of the former, and that is, our own corrupt nature. For the other two are without us; this is within us—it is an in-bred, an home-bred adversary. "A man's enemies (saith the prophet, and our Saviour from him) shall be those of his own house." An house-hold foe is much more dangerous than a foreigner, than one out of the house, though dwelling at the next door. But this enemy of ours is not in our house, but in our heart, lodged and seated in the very inwardest and secretest closet of our soul. The other two are professed adversaries—this a pretended friend: and a pretended friend is more dangerous than a professed foe. "It was not a professed enemy (saith David) that did me this wrong, for then could I well have borne it; nor was it an open adversary that set himself against me, for then could I have shunned him: but it was thou, O man, my companion, my counsellor, my guide, my familiar." And therefore "trust not a friend," saith the prophet; take heed especially of a false friend; "put no confidence in a counsellor; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom." But this false-hearted friend of ours lieth not in our bosom, but within our breast. Again, the other two cease sometimes their opposing of us—this is incessant, it never ceaseth. Though there be a continual enmity, a perpetual hostility, a war without truce between Satan and us; yet are we not always actually in skirmish and combat: we are not always in fight, though we be always in the field. Nor is the devil himself always about us or with us. But our corrupt nature is never from us, it is always in the very midst of us; we carry it about with us continually, whithersoever we go or wheresoever we become: and it is never idle in us, but incessantly working on us, continually either hindering us in

well-doing, or provoking us unto evil. “The flesh (saith the apostle) lusteth and striveth against the spirit, so that ye cannot do what you would.” And, “I find (by woful experience) that, when I would do good, evil is present with me: for mine inner man delighteth in the law of God; but I see (and feel) another law in my limbs rebelling against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin that is in my limbs.”

Lastly, without the help of this traitor, no other enemy can hurt us. “The devil himself cannot foil us, unless we ourselves will.” He may persuade and entice, suggest and provoke, but he cannot enforce or constrain, nor, unless our own heart give consent, cause us to sin. As we used, therefore, to say of the land and state that we live in, that “we need not fear any foreign foe, if we be true among ourselves;” so may it be said, much more truly, of our spiritual estate—we should not need to fear any outward adversary, either world or devil, if our own heart were and would be sure to keep true to us. But it is our own heart within us that is ready to join with our adversaries without us, and to betray us unto them. “The prince of this world,” saith our Saviour, hath been dealing with me, but “he found nothing in me,” and therefore prevailed not against me. But he never cometh to assault us but he findeth enough and too much in us—the main cause why so oft he prevaleth against us. He findeth many Judases within us, that are ready to join with him, to second him, to assist him, to fight for him, to betray us into his hands. Without this intestine traitor, then, the devil himself cannot hurt us, but it alone is able to hurt us without him. We need no other tempter to tempt or entice us to evil; we have an Eve, a tempter of our own, each one within us, more powerful and more effectual than any is or can be without us, and one that needeth not any help from without. “Every man (saith the apostle) is tempted when he is enticed and drawn aside by his own lust: and so lust, having conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, being consummate, bringeth forth death.” No need is there of other devil to delude or destroy us; there is devil enough in the hearts of every one of us to do either; there is enough in us without any devil’s help to effect either.

We have as much cause, then, to watch, even against ourselves, as against any adversary whatsoever. Since that, as the heathen man sometimes said, “every man is the first and the greatest flatterer of himself”—and others could never come to fasten their flatteries upon us if we did not before flatter ourselves—so every man is the first and the greatest enemy to himself: and other enemies could never do us any harm, if we did

not first conspire with them to hurt ourselves. And if they had need to be exceeding vigilant, and extraordinarily circumspect, that have not only many open enemies besetting and assaulting them on every side without, but many close traitors also, that have busy heads and working brains, plotting and practising continually their ruin at home; then surely no less cause have we to be extraordinarily watchful, whose case, as we see, is the very same. If our first parents had cause to watch in paradise, when there was no adversary but without, much more have we cause to watch, and to watch most diligently, now, when we have adversaries both without and within. For therein is the difference, as one saith well, between Adam and Judas, so between our first parents and us, that outward temptation prevented inward corruption in them—inward corruption preventeth outward temptation in us. So many adversaries, therefore, so vigilant, so diligent, round about us, on every side of us, before us, behind us, above us, beneath us, without us, within us, must needs enforce on us an incessant watchfulness, if we have any care of our own safety.

A third reason may be taken from the necessity of perseverance. "Whoso endureth to the end," saith our Saviour, he alone "shall be saved." The Christian course is compared to a race. "Let us run with patience (saith the apostle) the race set before us." And, "In a race (saith the same apostle) all run, but all win not." If we ask who win, he telleth us, elsewhere, that they only win the wager, or get the garland, that run according to the laws of the game, to the rules of the race. Now in worldly races the law of the game is, that none but he gaineth the prize that getteth first to the goal. But in the spiritual race the law is otherwise: for there not whoso cometh first, but whoso holdeth out to the last, be he in order of place or time first or last, is sure to win and to do well. "Be faithful to death, and thou shalt have the crown of life," saith our Saviour to each Christian soldier and soul. As in a race, then, it is to no purpose for a man to set out with the first, and to run eagerly awhile, if after some time he sit down and stay at the midway; yea, if he give over when he is within but a foot or two of the goal, it is all one as if he had never set foot into the field. So here: for a man to run well for a spurt, and then to give over, yea, to break off that good course that he was entered into but a day or two before decease, it is enough to annul all his former proceedings, and to make him to be in no better estate than if he had never set foot into the good ways of God. For "it is perseverance alone in well-doing that carrieth away the crown." The latter part of a man's life overswayeth the

former, and the former yieldeth it to the latter. “If the righteous man (saith the prophet, or rather God himself by the prophet) shall turn from his righteous course of life that before he lived in, none of his former good deeds shall be remembered or reckoned; but in the evil that then he doth he shall die.” Yea, to keep to the comparison that we have in our text, if a servant or soldier appointed to watch for his master’s coming, or against the enemy’s approach, shall continue watching till within an hour, or some shorter time, of the arrival of the one or the assault of the other, but shall then chance to fall fast asleep, he shall be no less in danger either to be shent of the one, or to be slain by the other, than if he had slept all out, and watched no time at all. And the like may be said of our spiritual watch, which, if we shall for any time intermit, or after any time give over, we may chance, in the interim, to be surprised, either by the justice of God or by the malice of Satan; and so be in danger of perishing everlasting by either, notwithstanding all our former watch. To which purpose saith our Saviour, in the words next before the text, that it is in this case “as when a man, going from home for a time, leaveth his servants to keep house, and setteth each one his task, and willeth the porter to watch:” and he warneth us all, therefore, to watch incessantly, because “we know not what time our Lord and Master may come—lest, if he come suddenly, he take us asleep.”

A fourth reason may be taken from the danger of relapse. “Go thy way (saith our Saviour to the cripple he had cured), and sin no more, lest a worse matter befall thee.” As we stand continually in no small danger of relapse, partly through the drowsiness of our own disposition, and partly through the diligence of our adversary, the devil (as before we have showed); so is there no small danger in relapse, and in relinquishing this our spiritual watch; which, if ever, therefore, we give over and fall from, it shall not be barely all one to us as if we had ever lain still asleep, but it shall be far worse with us than if we had never been awaked. For as it is in the diseases of the body, so it is likewise in the sickness of the soul. As in bodily sickness the relapse usually is worse and more dangerous, more incurable and irrecoverable than the disease itself was at first; so it falleth out commonly—yea, so it is ever ordinarily in this spiritual lethargy—that the relapse proveth more desperate than the disease was in itself. “For if men (saith the apostle), having escaped these worldly defilements, by the acknowledgment of Christ (or the profession of Christianity), come after to be entangled and again overcome of them, the latter estate of such is worse than the first: for it had been better for them never to

have taken notice of the good way of God, than, after notice taken of it, to turn again away from it; since that such, as the proverb truly speaketh, are like the dog, that resumeth his own vomit; and like swine, that, after washing, return again to their wallowing in the mire." As if he had said, in words applied to the present comparison, "It had been better for men to have lain fast asleep still, snoring securely in their sin, than having been, by the word and Spirit of God, raised and roused out of it, to fall afterward back again into some deadly fit of it."

They seldom awake again that fall the second time so fast asleep: partly for that, through their own inbred corruption (the evil humour that feedeth this drowsy disease) waxing commonly, in such cases, more fierce and furious than before (like a mastiff that breaketh loose, when he hath been tied up some time; or like the stream of a river that hath recovered scope again, where it had found some restraint formerly, either pent in with arches or bounded with banks), this spiritual lethargy, in the return of it, groweth stronger upon them, and so harder to be subdued and expelled than at first, like a malady that hath got the mastery, and now contemneth those remedies that curbed and abated the force of it for awhile. As also partly through Satan's malicious policy, who endeavoureth all he can, by plunging of such as have broken or been breaking away from him, if he can fasten again upon them, as deep as may be in all manner of impiety and impurity, thereby to make them surer than ever to himself; like the jailor, that, having laid hold on his prisoner again, that had either attempted or made escape from him, layeth load on him with irons, as many as he may bear, to make him sure from starting aside any more. Yea, and partly through the just judgment of God, who, upon such apostates—(as, though he have been so gracious and merciful unto them as to awake them out of this deadly slumber some time, yet he findeth them not thankful to him for it, nor steadfast and faithful with him, nor careful to keep their watch so as they should; but willing to sleep again, delighting in slumber, and repenting that ever they were awaked)—is wont to pour out the spirit, not of slumber, but of deep and dead sleep; so that it may be said of them, as of Saul and his troops, "A deep sleep of God was upon them, that they did not awake:" as he is said even to close up the eyes and to make the very hearts of such (not their heads only) "heavy, that they may not return or repent"—that is, be awaked any more again out of their dead sleep, and so healed of this their spiritual lethargy. And no marvel, then, if they seldom awake or recover, whom God, the devil, and their own corrupt heart—God in justice, the devil in

malice, and their own corrupt heart out of its own drowsy disposition—shall all conspire, as it were, together, to withhold from waking and from returning to their wonted watch.

So that whether we regard the drowsiness of our own natural disposition, or the diligence of our adversary ever watching against us, or the necessity of perseverance and holding out to the end, or the dreadful danger of relapse, if we fall from our former forwardness, and either intermit or give over our watch and our standing upon our guard; we cannot but see the truth of the point formerly propounded—to wit, that it is not sufficient for us that we have been awaked out of this spiritual sleep of sin, but there is further need of perpetual care to be had for the keeping of us from falling back into that deadly slumber again.

DUTY OF CHRISTIAN RESOLUTION

BY RICHARD ALLESTREE, D.D., REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY, OXON.

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JAMES iv. 7.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

THOUGH no man can be tempted, so as to be foiled by the temptation, but “he that is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed ;” and all the blandishments of this world, all the wiles and artifices of the prince and god of it, the devil, are not able to betray one into sin till his own lust conceives that sin and brings it forth ; man must be taken first in his own nets, and “fall into that pit himself hath digged,” before he can become the devil’s prey ; yet Satan hath so great a hand in this affair, that “the tempter” is his name and office. And the war which is now before us is so purely his, that we are said to fight, “not against flesh and blood (those nests and fortresses of our own lusts), but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,” that is, against the enemy here in the text, the devil.

St. Paul does fetch the rise of unbelief of Christianity from hence : “If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost ; in whom the god of this world hath blinded their minds ;” that is, if the Christian doctrine do not appear to be the truth of God to any, it is to obstinate persons only, whom the devil hath besotted so with the advantages and pleasures of this world, that their affections to these will not let the other be admitted.

“Resist the devil”—that is, do not you consent to his temptations ; for there is no more required of us but this only, not to be willing to be taken and led captive by him. For let him suggest, incite, assault, and storm us, no impression can be made upon us till we yield ; and till we give consent no hurt is done. It is not here as in our other wars ; in those no resolution can secure the victory, but, notwithstanding all resistance possible, we may be vanquished ; yea, sometimes men are overpressed and die with conquering, and the victor only gains a monument, is but buried in the heaps of his slain trophies. But in these wars with the devil, whosoever is unwilling to be vanquished, never can be ; for he must first give consent to it, and will the ruin : for men do not sin against their wills. Only here we must distinguish betwixt will and thin velleity and woudling. For let no man think,

when he commits deliberate iniquity with averseness and reluctancy of mind—allows not what he does, but does the evil that he would not, what he hates that he does—that this is not to be imputed to the will—that in this case he is not willing; but here the “spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,” and yields through mere infirmity. For, on the contrary, the devil finds the flesh so strong in this case, that with it alone he does assault the mind, and breaks through its reluctancies and aversions—bears down all its resolutions—triumphs over all that does pretend to God or virtue in him. Where it is thus, let no man flatter or persuade himself he does what he would not, when it is plain he does impetuously will the doing it. Let him not think that he allows not, but hates that which he does, when it is certain in that moment that he does commit, not to allow that which he does resolve, and pitch upon, and choose; to hate what with complacency he acts; or to do that unwillingly which he is wrought on by his own concupiscence to do, and by his inward incitations, by the mutiny of his own affections, which the devil raises, and when it is the mere height and prevalency of his appetite that does make him do it (as it must be where there is reluctancy before he do it—his desires and affections there are evidently too strong for him); or, at last, to hate the doing that which it is his too much love to that makes him do, are all impossibilities—the same things as to will against the will, desire against appetite. But do but keep thyself sincerely, and in truth, from being willing, and thou must be safe; for God expects no more but that we should not voluntarily yield to our undoing. He hath furnished us with his own complete armour, for no farther uses of a war but to encourage us to stand: “Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” And again: “Put ye on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” There is no need to do more than this—not to be willing and consent to fall; for no man can be beaten down but he that will fall.

It were very easy for me to prescribe you how to fortify against those engines of the devil’s battery which I produced to you. But that I may not stay upon particulars, directing those whom he prevails upon, through want of employment, to find out honest occasions not to be idle (and sure it is the most unhappy thing in the world for any man to be necessitated to be vicious, by his having nothing else to do, and because, while the world accounts it a pedantic thing to be brought up by rules, and under discipline, he cannot learn how to employ himself to his advantage): to pass by these, I say, the universal strength

against this enemy is faith : " Your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion, goeth up and down seeking whom he may devour ; whom resist steadfast in the faith." And that not only as it frustrates all that he attempts by means of infidelity, but it also " quenches all his fiery darts," whatsoever bright temptation he presents to draw us from our duty, or whatever fiery trial he makes use of to affright and martyr with. For the man whose faith does give him evidence and eyesight of those blessed promises " eye hath not seen," and gives substance, present solid being, to his after hopes, and whose heart hath swallowed down those happy expectations which " have never entered in the heart of man to comprehend," what is there that can tempt or fright him from his station ? To make all that, which Satan gave the prospect of, prevail on such a soul, the kingdoms of the earth must outvie God's kingdom, and their gauds outshine his glory, and the twinkling of an eye seem longer than eternity ; for nothing less than these will serve his turn, all these are in his expectations. Or what can fright the man whose heart is set above the sphere of terrors ? who knows calamity, how great soever, can inflict but a more sudden and more glorious blessedness upon him ; and the most despiteful cruel usage can but persecute him into heaven. It is easy to demonstrate that a faith and expectation of the things on earth, built upon weaker grounds than any man may have for his belief of things above, hath charged much greater hazards, overcome more difficulties than the devil does assault us with. For sure none is so sceptical but he will grant that we have firmer grounds to think there is another world in heaven than Columbus (if he were the first discoverer) had to think there was another earth ; and that there are far richer hopes laid up there in that other world, for those that do deny themselves the sinful profits and the jollities of this, and force them from their inclinations, than those seamen could expect who first had ventured with him thither: for they could not think to gain much for themselves ; but only take seizin of the land (if any such there were) for other's covetous cruelty ; could get little else but only richer graves, and to lie buried in their yellow earth. Nor are we assaulted in our voyage with such hazards as they knew they must encounter with ; the path of virtue and the way to heaven is not so beset with difficulties as theirs was, when they must cut it out themselves through an unknown new world of ocean, where they could see nothing else but swelling gaping death, from an abyss of which they were but weakly guarded, and removed few inches only ; and, as if the most dangerous shipwrecks were on shore, they found a land more savage and more monstrous than that sea. Yet all this they

vanquished for such slender hopes, and upon so uncertain a belief. A weak faith, therefore, can do mighty works, greater than any that we stand in need of to encounter with our enemy ; it can remove these mountains, too, the golden ones that covetousness and ambition do cast up : yea, more, it can remove the devil also ; for if you resist him steadfast in the faith he flies, which is the happy issue, and my last part.

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” And yet it cannot be denied but that sometimes, when the messenger of Satan comes to buffet, though St. Paul resist him with the strength of prayer (which when Moses managed he was able to prevail on God himself, and the Lord articed with him that he might be let alone), yet he could not beat off this assailant. When God, either for prevention, or for exercising or illustrating of graces, or for some other of his blessed ends, gives a man up to the assaults of Satan, he is often pleased to continue the temptation long ; but in that case he does never fail to send assistances and aids enough against it. “My grace is sufficient for thee,” saith he to St. Paul. And when he will have us tempted for his uses (if we be not failing to ourselves) he does prevent our being overcome ; so that there is no danger in those trials from their stay. But yet it must not be denied but that the devil does prevail sometimes, by importunacy, and by continuance of temptation ; so that resistance is not always a repulse, at least, not such an one as to make him draw off and fly. It is not strange to find him siding with a natural inclination—with the bent of constitution, still presenting objects, laying opportunities, throwing in examples and all sorts of invitation, always pressing so, that when a man hath struggled long he does grow weary of the service, not enduring to be thus upon his guard perpetually, watching a weak heart, with strong inclinations, busy devils do lay siege to ; and so, growing slack and careless, he is presently surprised : or else, despairing that he shall be always able to hold out, lays hold upon a tempting opportunity, and yields, by the most unreasonable and basest cowardice that can be—yields for fear of yielding ; lest he should not hold out, he will not, but gives up, and puts himself into that very mischief which he would avoid merely for fear of coming into it. For which fear there is no reason neither ; for it is not here as in our other sieges, where, if it be close, continuance must reduce men to necessity of yielding ; strengths and ammunitions will decay, provisions fail, and, if the enemy cannot, their own hunger will break through their walls, and make avenues for conquest—time alone will take them : but in these spiritual sieges one repulse enables for another, and the more we have resisted the temptation is not

only so much flatter, and more weak and baffled, but the inward man is stronger: victory does give new forces, and is sure to get in fresh and still sufficient supplies. For “God giveth more grace,” saith St. James: and “they shall have abundance,” saith our Saviour. So that where the devil, after several repulses, still comes on with fresh assaults, we may be sure he does discern there is some treacherous inclination that sides with him; and, although the man refuse himself the satisfaction of the sin, the devil sees he hath a mind to it; his refusals are but faint, not hearty, though he seem afraid to come within the quarters of the vice; he keeps, it may be, correspondence with the incentives to it—entertains the opportunities—plays with the objects—or, at best, he does not fortify against him. Now this gives the tempter hopes, and invites his assaults, and does expose the person to be taken by him.

But where he sees he is resisted heartily, his offers are received with an abhorrency—discerns men are in earnest: watch to avoid all opportunities and occasions, and prepare and fortify and arm against him; there he will not stay to be the triumph of their virtue. We may know this by his agents—those that work under the devil, whom he hath instructed in the mysteries of waging his temptations. Where they are not like to speed (and as to this they have discerning spirits), they avoid, and hate, and come not near, but study spite and mischief only there. The intemperate men are most uneasy with a person whom they are not able to engage in the debauch: the rudeness and brutality of their excesses are not so offensive to the sober man, as his staid virtue is to them; they do not more avoid the crude egestions, shameful spewings of their overtaken fellow’s riot, than they do the shame and the reproach that such a man’s strict conversation casts on them, which does in earnest make them look more foul and nasty to themselves. In fine, every sinner shuns the company of those whom he believes religious in earnest; it is an awe and check to them; they are afraid and out at it, as their great master also is, who, when he is resisted, must be overcome. And as they that are beaten have their own fears also for their enemies, which are sure to charge close, put to flight, chase and pursue them; so it seems he also is afraid of a sincere and hearty Christian, for he flies him. So he did from Christ; and so the text assures, “If you resist him, he will flee from you.”

And now, although we all did once “renounce the devil and his works”—were listed soldiers against him—took a sacrament upon it and our souls, the immortality of life or misery depend upon our being true and faithful to ourselves and oaths, or

otherwise ; nor is there more required of us but resolution and fidelity, only not to be consenting to our enemy's conquest of us, not to will captivity and servitude. Yet, as if in mere defiance of our vows and interests, we not only willed the ruin, but would fight for it, we may find, instead of this resisting of the devil, most men do resist the Holy Ghost : quench not the fiery darts of Satan, but the Spirit and his flames, by which he would enkindle love of God and virtue in them. If he take advantage of some warm occasion to inflame their courage against former follies, heat them into resolutions of a change ; as soon as that occasion goes off, they put out those flames, and choke these heats until they die. If he come in his soft whispers, speak close to the heart, suggest and call them to those joys of which himself is earnest—to all these they shut their ears, can hear no whispers, are not sensible of any sounds of things at such a distance, sounds to which they give no more regard than to things of the same extravagance with the music of the spheres. Nay, if he come with his more active methods, as the angels came to Lot—send mercy to allure and take them by the hand, as they did, to invite and lead them out of Sodom ; if that will not, judgments then to thrust them out, as they did also, conie with fire and brimstone to affright them ; they not only, like the men of Sodom, do attempt a violence and rape upon those very angels, but they really debauch the mercies and profane the judgment, having blinded their own eyes, that they might see no hand of God in either ; using thus unkindly all his blessed methods of reclaiming them, till they have grieved him so that he forsake and leave them utterly. As if they had not heard that, when the Holy Spirit is thus forced away, the evil spirit takes his place. As if they knew not that, to those who close their eyes and stop their ears against the Holy Spirit's motions, till they are grown dull of hearing and blind to them, God does send a spirit of slumber, that they should not see nor hear ; and that for this dire reason, that they may not be converted, nor be saved. Five times he affirms it in the Scripture. Yea, once more, in words of a sad emphasis : “ He sends them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.” And that “ because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” Blessed God ! is it so easy for such sinners to believe and be converted, that thyself shouldst interpose to hinder it, and hide the possibilities of mercy from their eyes, that they may never receive them nor recover ? What can then become of those for whom God does contrive that they shall not escape, when, instead of those bowels that did make

him "swear he would not have the sinner die, but would have him return and live," he puts on so much indignation at such sinners, as to take an order that they shall not repent, and take an order that they shall be damned.

And yet all this is only to those men, who, being dull of hearing the suggestions of the Spirit, and not willing to give entertainment to his holy motions, grieve him so, that they repel and drive him quite away; and so, by consequence, only make way for the devil. Whereas there are others that directly call him, force him to them, ravish and invade occasions to serve him. Some there are that study how to disbelieve, and with great labour and contrivance work out arguments and motives to persuade themselves to atheism. Others practice discipline, and exercise themselves to be engaged in vice. Some dress so as to lay baits, snares, to entrap temptation, that they may be sure it may not pass them. Others feed high, to invite and entertain the tempter, do all that is possible to make him come, and to assure him that he must prevail, when they have made it most impossible for themselves to stand and to resist.

Some there are, indeed, whom he does not overcome so easily, but is put to compound with them, takes them upon articles: for when he would engage them to a sin to which he sees they have great inclinations, with some fears, he is fain to persuade them to repent when they have done, to lay hold upon the present opportunity, and not let the satisfaction escape them, but be sorry after, and amend. For where these resolutions of repentance usher in transgression, there we may be sure it is the devil that suggests those resolutions. But if he can get admittance once thus, by prevailing with a person to receive him upon purposes of after penitence, he is sure to prosper still in his attempts upon the same condition; for repentance will wash out another sin, if he commit it, and so on. And it is evident that by this very train he does draw most men on through the whole course of sin and life: for never do they, till they see themselves at the last stage, begin repenting. When they are to grapple with death's forces, then they are to set upon resisting of the devil. And when they are grown so weak that their whole soul must be employed to muster all its spirits, all their strength, but to beat off one little spot of phlegm that does besiege the avenues of breath, the ports of life, and sally at it, and assault it, once, again, and a third, many times, and yet with all the fury of its might cannot break through, nor beat off that little clot of spittle—when it is thus, yet then are they to wrestle with and conquer "principalities and powers, all the rulers of the utter darkness, pull down the strongholds of sin within, cast down

imaginings, and every high thing that did exalt itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" and with those feeble hands, that they are scarcely able to lift up in a short wish or prayer—they must do all this, resist the devil, and take heaven by force.

Now sure to put it off to such a fatal season, is a purpose of a desperate concern. In God's name let us set upon the doing it while there is something left of principle and vigour in us; ere we have so grieved God's Spirit, that he do resolve to leave us utterly; and before the devil have so broke us to his yoke, that we become content and pleased to do his drudgery. We deceive ourselves if we think to do it with more ease when constitution is grown weaker, as if then temptations would not be so strong; for the habits will be then confirmed, vice grown heroical, and we wholly in the power of Satan—dead and senseless under it, not so much as stirring to get out. But if we strive before he have us in his clutches, we have an enemy that can vanquish none but those who consent to, and comply and confederate with, him—those that will be overcome. So that if we resist, he must be conquered, and temptation must be conquered too; for he will fly, and then, by consequence, must cease to trouble and molest us. This is the sure way to be rid of temptations, to put to flight the great artificer and prince of them, subdue and overcome him and ourselves. And "to him that overcometh thus, Christ will grant to sit with him on his throne, as he also overcame, and sat down with his Father on his throne."

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN PEARSON, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

OBEDIENCE TO ECCLESIASTICAL RULERS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. W. WARBURTON, D.D., BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

F A S T I N G.

BY THE RT. REV. JOHN HACKET, D.D., BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY.

OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. GEORGE SMALRIDGE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

THE ANGLICAN RITUAL.

BY THE RIGHT REV. THOMAS NEWTON, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

INTRODUCTION.

THE duties which the Christian owes to God more immediately are, as we have seen, of a twofold character; first, namely, those which result from the nature and attributes of Deity; and, secondly, those which result from the fallen condition of humanity, and the consequent state of probation in which man is placed.

But the list of religious duties does not stop here—there is a third class, which arise from our relation to the **VISIBLE** Church of Christ, as the channel and conveyance of spiritual blessings: these last, or, as they may be called, ecclesiastical duties, are, in this country, so blended with our civil ones, that they cannot be profitably considered altogether apart. The Monarchy and the Episcopacy—a flourishing condition of the Church and a *truly* flourishing condition of the State—have, by God's providence, in these kingdoms, invariably coincided. When, in the great Rebellion, the Church was for a time suppressed, the Monarchy fell with it, and at the Restoration both were reinstated together; nor shall we see reason to believe that any other is ever likely to be the case, so long as we believe that sin is the cause and root of all evils, both national and individual. The greatest judgment which can be brought upon a nation is the unchurching it; the greatest subsequent blessing the restoration of the Church. Thus was it with the Jews of old: in the times of their captivity their ritual could not be properly performed, and they rejoiced more when they recovered their temple service than even in the restitution of their political condition.

We have an instance in the conduct of Nehemiah, on the return of the Jews from their exile and captivity in Babylon. The enemies of God and his people had destroyed the temple of Jerusalem, had caused the sacrifices and many other ceremonies of the law to cease, and had forced into banishment princes and nobles, the priests and the people of the Lord. On their return the Jews rebuilt the temple; and afterwards, much desecration having occurred, Nehemiah commanded, and they cleansed the chambers, and thither brought he again the

vessels of the house of God: preparations were made for the due performance of divine service—lawfully ordained ministers appointed.

To appreciate those blessings which we enjoy, and the restoration of which is annually commemorated by our Church, we ought to consider the condition to which we should be reduced were we deprived of them.

Living, as we do, in peace and security, and having the constant opportunity of profiting by the appointed means of grace, we are apt to forget the continual gratitude which we owe to God for these things, and to consider them as mere matters of course. They are to us, like the light by which we see, or the air which we breathe, great and important blessings, but seldom regarded as such.

Confine a man in a dungeon, deprive him of daylight and pure air, and he will soon feel the inestimable value of that which he has lost.

Anarchy, or the absence of constituted authority and acknowledged law, is an evil of the greatest magnitude, pressing upon every rank of that nation which suffers under it; for the rich can no longer enjoy that wealth which they may lose to-morrow; the poor have no incentive to obtain comforts of which they may be deprived at any moment; and outrages of every description are committed, where justice and her ministers are alike powerless. The weakness of woman, the tenderness of youth, the debility of sickness, and the infirmity of age, form so many reasons for making their defenceless possessors the victims of cruelty, rapacity, and crime; and the unvarying experience of every age and every nation has proved that, except where a constitution, after having been overborne for a time, arises again with renewed vigour, the unbridled violence and robbery of *many* tyrants must end in the violence and robbery of *ONE*.

But let us turn from the contemplation of anarchy and its evils to those which were caused by the persecution of our Church. We are, at present, furnished with the means of grace, of which our Church is the channel—those means of grace which strengthen and cherish our hopes of glory: but during the persecution of our Church, incident to the great Rebellion and its results, this was, in many, very many places, not the case. Instead of the beautiful and time-honoured liturgy which we now repeat, the blasphemous ravings of ungodly fanatics resounded through the house of God; instead of those ordained by lineal succession from the apostles of our Lord, within those very edifices which had been consecrated by their successors, men ministered, who, unlike Aaron, had taken

this honour unto themselves—men who “went in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Baalam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Korah.” No absolution assured the repentant sinner of divine forgiveness—no benediction brought before the sincere believer that peace of God which passeth all understanding—no faithful people met together to partake the body and blood of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The voice of our Church was not heard amid their gladness, nor did her lament mingle with their sorrow. Marriage was not hallowed with her blessing, nor sickness consoled by her prayer. She was prevented alike from receiving into her bosom the helpless infant, or proclaiming rest and joy to those that die in the Lord.

We ought not, then, to be insensible to the infinite mercy of God in relieving us from these calamities, and in restoring to us the integrity of our Constitution and the rights of our Church. Well may we “sing a new song unto our God, and praises on the ten-stringed lute. Who gave victory unto our king, and saved him from the peril of the sword. Who delivered us from our affliction, and rescued us from our enemies, whose mouth talked lying vanities, and their right hand was full of wickedness. Who redeemed the captivity of Israel, and rebuilded the gates of Zion. Happy is the people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord.”

But if we duly estimate and rightly feel these blessings, we shall give proof thereof by our general conduct—

I. By our conduct as subjects and as Churchmen.

II. By our conduct in every other relation of life.

And, firstly, by our conduct as subjects and as Churchmen we shall prove how highly we prize the blessings which we possess. For if we prize those blessings as we ought to prize them, we shall feel a deep and reverential attachment to our Constitution and our Church; and this attachment will show itself in all our actions and words, and even thoughts.

Nor is it merely because we are sensible of the blessings conveyed to us by them that we ought thus to act, and speak, and think. The divine origin of lawful authority, both civil and ecclesiastical, should endue us with reverence towards them both, as the ordinances of God. This reverence is, in the present day, seldom expressed, and yet more seldom *felt*; but the customs or feelings of the age in which we chance to live, the changes of human opinion, the revolutions of human society, cannot alter or affect the counsels of Him who is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” And to adduce such things as excuses for doing otherwise than God has commanded, is to add

blasphemy to disobedience; for it is to raise this world, and consequently to raise Satan, the prince of this world, above the mighty Lord, the everlasting God.

The question which we should ask is not—do men think so? does the world say so?—but, has God commanded? It is our duty to throw off the false opinions, the besetting sins, the worldly prejudices which control our actions and words, and even thoughts, and simply serve the Lord with all our heart, and all our mind, and all our strength.

The reverence which we owe to lawful civil authority, and more especially that which we owe to her who is in all things, “ecclesiastical as well as civil, supreme,” finds few to advocate, and still fewer to feel it. And yet “Fear God, honour the king” is a clear, full precept; and “Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people” is another. The conduct of holy men has been uniform on this point; let us imitate them, and obey God, and earnestly pray to him that we “may faithfully serve, honour, and humbly obey her, in him and for him, according to his blessed word and ordinance,” and that he may give to us such self-denying and fervent loyalty as was that of Mephibosheth, when, after losing half his property, he exclaimed—“Yea, let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is come unto his own house.” In approaching the *bare idea* of our sovereign we should advance with a holy awe—we should act towards, speak, and think of her, not as a mere fellow-creature, upon whose conduct and actions we have a right to pass hasty judgment, according to our fancy or caprice; but we should always remember that she is the temporal head of the Church, and, as such, the minister of heaven, the vicegerent of God, receiving her glory, her station, and her power from the Eternal. For as the moon which shineth by night derives all her splendour from the unseen sun, so does our sovereign derive her borrowed lustre from Him who is for ever.

Nor should our reverence be confined to the lawful possessor of *temporal* authority. The Church of Christ, too, demands our respect and our deference. “Her foundations are upon the holy hills: the Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house, and the swallow a nest, where she may lay her young, even thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King and my God.” Well may we accommodate to her the Psalmist’s words, and say—“Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt, thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Thou madest room for it, and when it had taken root it filled the land. The hills are covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof are like goodly

cedar trees. She stretcheth her branches unto the sea, and her boughs unto the river."

As we are not here discussing questions of Church discipline, but solely exhorting to Christian practice, we shall not touch, save *generally*, on what the Church, as a Church, has commanded. We shall consider what we mean by the Holy Catholic Church: we shall go on to show, *generally*, the duty of obedience to her, point out the excellencies of her ritual, and touch on one duty about which many errors prevail—we allude to that of Fasting. As, however, Bishop Hacket, one of the soundest of divines, and one of the holiest of men, has written expressly upon it, we have given his sentiments in his own language.

One of those questions, which appear to have most puzzled both readers and writers, is the duty of obedience to the Church in matters which the Church admits to be non-essential; such as, for instance, ceremonies. On this topic the tract by Bishop Smalridge, of Bristol, may be consulted with advantage, as he enters into the subject at some length, and notices all the objections usually urged.

To conclude: it would seem that so moderate is our Church in her demands, so simple in her rites, so apostolical in her practice, that both her ritual and her establishment are to us blessings of no common order. But, if we earnestly desire to retain these blessings, we must not expect that our wishes will be accomplished without prayer to Almighty God; nor by prayer alone, however fervent and sincere; nor by attachment to our Constitution and our Church, however devoted and unhesitating. There is something yet required to obtain the divine blessing, and that is individual holiness. And holiness does not consist in the practising any one particular virtue, and avoiding any one particular sin; but it is that state of mind resulting from the predominant influence of faith working by love, and it is evidenced by a constant, earnest, humble endeavour to fulfil the *whole* will of God. "For whoso keepeth the *whole* law (saith St. James), and yet offendeth in one point, he is guilty of all."

B.

Oxford, Feb. 25, 1842.

NOTE ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE Romanists are fond of asserting that theirs is the old religion of England, and that their bishops and clergy are the true representatives of the bishops and clergy who had jurisdiction in England before the Reformation. No assertion could be more unfounded.

Those bishops who did not accede to the Reformation left no successors. For several years after the accession of Elizabeth, the adherents of the Pope continued to attend public worship. At this period the Pope entertained considerable hopes of inducing Elizabeth to admit his supremacy. As soon as he became convinced that this was impossible, he determined to form his English adherents into a separate sect. By his orders they ceased to frequent church; and, in order to foment among them a spirit of sedition, and also to prevent their being deprived of the sacraments, priests ordained abroad were sent into this country. Till the reign of James II. there were no Romish bishops in England. The present Romanists are, therefore, schismatical seceders from the Church, and their bishops and clergy have no lawful jurisdiction in England. The jurisdiction of the present archbishops and bishops comes to them through those who possessed it in Edward VI.'s reign, who were schismatically deprived by Mary, but restored by Elizabeth, and who are the only persons through whom the succession from the Ante-Elizabethan English bishops has been preserved.

It is true that several of the distinctive articles of belief now taught by the Romish priests were very generally taught and believed in England in the ages immediately preceding the Reformation. But it is equally true that these articles were innovations on the primitive faith of the Church; blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits, maintained by the usurped authority of the bishop of Rome, and made instrumental to his aggrandizement. These blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits were renounced by the Church of England at the great era of the Reformation, and we returned, through God's mercy, to the pure doctrines of his holy word, which had been received and believed long before the Popish fictions were heard of.—*A Sermon against Insubordination, by Philalethes.* 1842.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN PEARSON, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

For the understanding of the true notion of the Church, first, we must observe, that the nominal definition or derivation of the word is not sufficient to describe the nature of it. If we look upon the old English word now in use, Church, or Kirk, it is derived from the Greek, and first signified the house of the Lord, that is, of Christ, and from thence was taken to signify the people of God meeting in the house of God. The Greek word used by the apostles to express the Church signifieth a calling forth, if we look upon the origination—a congregation of men, or a company assembled, if we consider the use of it. But neither of these doth fully express the nature of the Church, what it is in itself, and as it is propounded to our belief.

Our second observation is, that the Church hath been taken for the whole complex of men and angels worshipping the same God: and again, the angels being not considered, it hath been taken as comprehending all the sons of men believing in God ever since the foundation of the world. But being Christ took not upon him the nature of angels, and, consequently, did not properly purchase them with his blood or call them by his word; being they are not in the Scriptures mentioned as parts or members of the Church, nor can be imagined to be built upon the prophets or apostles; being we are at this time to speak of the proper notion of the Church—therefore I shall not look upon it as comprehending any more than the sons of men. Again, being, though Christ was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, and whosoever from the beginning pleased God were saved by his blood, yet, because there was a vast difference between the several dispensations of the law and Gospel; because our Saviour spake expressly of building himself a church when the Jewish synagogue was about to fail; because Catholicism, which is here attributed unto the Church, must be understood in opposition to the legal singularity of the Jewish nation; because the ancient Fathers were generally wont to distinguish between the synagogue and the church;

therefore I think it necessary to restrain this notion to Christianity.

Thirdly, therefore, I observe, that the only way to attain unto the knowledge of the true notion of the Church is to search into the New Testament, and, from the places there which mention it, to conclude what is the nature of it. To which purpose it will be necessary to take notice, that our Saviour, first speaking of it, mentioneth it as that which then was not, but afterwards was to be: as when he spake unto the great apostle —“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church;” but when he ascended into heaven, and the Holy Ghost came down—when Peter had converted three thousand souls, which were added to the hundred and twenty disciples—then was there a Church (and that built upon Peter, according to our Saviour’s promise); for after that we read—“The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.” A Church, then, our Saviour promised should be built, and by a promise made before his death: after his ascension, and upon the preaching of St. Peter, we find a Church built or constituted, and that of a nature capable of a daily increase. We cannot, then, take a better occasion to search into the true notion of the Church of Christ than by looking into the origination and increase thereof.

Now what we are infallibly assured of the first actual existence of a Church of Christ is only this. There were twelve apostles, with the disciples, before the descent of the Holy Ghost, and “the number of the names together were an hundred and twenty.” When the Holy Ghost came, after a powerful and miraculous manner, upon the blessed apostles, and St. Peter preached unto the Jews “that they should repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” These, being thus added to the rest, “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers;” and all these persons so continuing are called the Church. What this Church was is easily determined; for it was a certain number of men, of which some were apostles, some the former disciples; others were persons which repented, and believed, and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and continued hearing the word preached, receiving the sacraments administered, joining in the public prayers presented unto God. This was then the Church, which was daily increased by the addition of other persons received into it upon the same conditions, making up “the multitude of them that believed,

who were of one heart and one soul, believers added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."

But though the Church was thus begun, and represented unto us as one in the beginning—though that Church which we profess to believe in the creed be also propounded unto us as one, and so the notion of the Church in the Acts of the Apostles might seem sufficient to express the nature of that Church which we believe; yet, because that Church was one by way of origination, and was afterwards divided into many, the actual members of that one becoming the members of several Churches, and that Church which we believe is otherwise one by way of complexion, receiving the members of all Churches into it, it will be necessary to consider how at the first those several Churches were constituted, that we may understand how, in this one Church, they are all united. To which purpose it will be further fit to examine the several acceptations of this word, as it is diversely used by the Holy Ghost in the New Testament, that, if it be possible, nothing may escape our search, but that all things may be weighed, before we collect and conclude the full notion of the Church from thence.

First, then, that word which signifies the Church, in the original Greek, is sometimes used in the vulgar sense, according as the native Greeks did use the same to express their conventions, without any relation to the worship of God or Christ, and therefore is translated by the word assembly, of as great a latitude. Secondly, it is sometimes used in the same notion in which the Greek translators of the Old Testament made use of it for the assembly of the people of God under the law, and therefore might be most fitly translated the congregation, as it is in the Old Testament. Thirdly, it has been conceived, that even in the Scriptures it is sometimes taken for the place in which the members of the Church did meet to perform their solemn and public services unto God; and some passages there are which seem to speak no less, but yet are not so certainly to be understood of the place but that they may as well be spoken of the people congregated in a certain place. Beside these few different acceptations, the Church, in the language of the New Testament, doth always signify a company of persons professing the Christian faith, but not always in the same latitude. Sometimes it admitteth of distinction and plurality; sometimes it reduceth all into conjunction and unity. Sometimes the Churches of God are diversified as many; sometimes, as many as they are, they are all comprehended in one.

For, first, in general, there are often mentioned the Churches by way of plurality—the Churches of God, the Churches of the

Gentiles, the Churches of the Saints. In particular, we find a few believers gathered together in the house of one single person, called a Church; as the Church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, the Church in the house of Nymphas, the Church in the house of Philemon; which Churches were nothing else but the believing and baptized persons of each family, with such as they admitted and received into their house, to join in the worship of the same God.

Again, when the Scripture speaketh of any country where the Gospel had been preached, it nameth always, by way of plurality, the Churches of that country—as the Churches of Judea, of Samaria, and Galilee; the Churches of Syria and of Cilicia; the Churches of Galatia, the Churches of Asia, the Churches of Macedonia. But, notwithstanding there were several such Churches or congregations of believers in great and populous cities, yet the Scriptures always speak of such congregations in the notion of one Church. As when St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians—“Let your women keep silence in the Churches;” yet the dedication of his epistle is, “Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth.” So we read not of the Churches, but the Church at Jerusalem, the Church at Antioch, the Church at Cæsarea, the Church at Ephesus, the Church of the Thessalonians, the Church of Laodicea, the Church of Smyrna, the Church of Pergamos, the Church of Thyatira, the Church of Sardis, the Church of Philadelphia. From whence it appeareth, that a collection of several congregations, every one of which is, in some sense, a Church, and may be called so, is, properly, one Church, by virtue of the subordination of them all in one government, under one ruler. For thus, in those great and populous cities where Christians were very numerous, not only all the several Churches within the cities, but those also in the adjacent parts, were united under the care and inspection of one bishop, and therefore was accounted one Church, the number of the Churches following the number of the angels, that is, the rulers of them, as is evident in the Revelation.

Now, as several Churches are reduced to the denomination of one Church, in relation to the single governor of those many Churches, so all the Churches of all cities and all nations in the world may be reduced to the same single denomination, in relation to one supreme governor of them all, and that one governor is Christ, the bishop of our souls. Wherefore the apostle, speaking of that in which all Churches do agree, comprehendeth them all under the same appellation of one Church; and, therefore, often by the name of Church are understood all

Christians whatsoever, belonging to any of the Churches dispersed through the distant and divided parts of the world. For the single persons professing faith in Christ are members of the particular Churches in which they live, and all those particular Churches are members of the general and universal Church, which is one by unity of aggregation; and this is the Church in the creed which we believe, and which is in other creeds expressly termed *one*—“I believe in one Holy Catholic Church.”

It will, therefore, be further necessary, for the understanding of the nature of the Church which is thus one, to consider in what that unity doth consist. And, being it is an aggregation not only of many persons, but also of many congregations, the unity thereof must consist in some agreement of them all, and adhesion to something which is one. If, then, we reflect upon the first Church again, which we found constituted in the Acts, and to which all other since have been, in a manner, added and conjoined, we may collect, from their union and agreement, how all other Churches are united and agree. Now they were described to be believing and baptized persons, converted to the faith by St. Peter, continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and prayers. These, then, were all built upon the same rock, all professed the same faith, all received the same sacraments, all performed the same devotions, and thereby were all reputed members of the same Church. To this Church were added daily such as should be saved; who became members of the same Church, by being built upon the same foundation, by adhering to the same doctrine, by receiving the same sacraments, by performing the same devotions.

From whence it appeareth that the first unity of the Church, considered in itself, beside that of the Head, which is one Christ, and the life communicated from that Head, which is one Spirit, relieth upon the original of it, which is one; even as a house built upon one foundation, though consisting of many rooms, and every room of many stones, it is not yet many, but one house. Now there is but one foundation upon which the Church is built, and that is Christ: “for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” And though the apostles and the prophets be also termed the foundation, yet even then the unity is preserved; because as they are stones in the foundation, so they are united by one corner-stone: whereby it comes to pass, that such persons as are of the Church, being “fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God, are built upon the foundation of the apostles

and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.” This stone was “laid in Zion for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation :” there was the first Church built, and whosoever have been, or ever shall be, converted to the true Christian faith, are and shall be added to that Church, and laid upon the same foundation, which is the unity of origination. Our Saviour gave the same power to all the apostles which was to be found in the Church ; but he gave that power to Peter to show the unity of the same Church.

Secondly, the Church is therefore one, though the members be many, because they all agree in one faith. There is “one Lord, and one faith,” and that faith “once delivered to the saints,” which whosoever shall receive, embrace, and profess, must necessarily be accounted one, in reference to that profession. For if a company of believers become a Church by believing, they must also become one Church by believing one truth. If they be one in respect of the foundation, which is ultimately one ; if we look upon Christ, which is mediately one ; if we look upon the apostles, united in one corner-stone ; if those which believe be therefore said to be built upon the foundation of the apostles, because they believe the doctrine which the apostles preached, and the apostles be therefore said to be of the same foundation, and united to the corner-stone, because they all taught the same doctrine which they received from Christ, then they which believe the same doctrine delivered by Christ to all the apostles, delivered by all the apostles to believers, being all professors of the same faith, must be members of the same Church. And this is the unity of faith.

Thirdly, many persons and Churches, howsoever distinguished by time or place, are considered as one Church, because they acknowledge and receive the same sacraments, the signs and badges of the people of God. When the apostles were sent to found and build the Church, they received this commission—“ Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Now as there is but one Lord and one faith, so also is there but one baptism ; and, consequently, they which are admitted to it, in receiving it are one. Again, at the institution of the Lord’s supper, Christ commanded, saying—“ Eat ye all of this, drink ye all of this ;” and all, by communication of one, become, as to that communication, one. “ For we, being many, are one bread and one body ; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” As,

therefore, the “Israelites were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink,” and thereby appeared to be the one people of God, so all believing persons and all Churches congregated in the name of Christ, washed in the same laver of regeneration, eating of the same bread, and drinking of the same cup, are united in the same cognizance, and so known to be the same Church. And this is the unity of the sacraments.

Fourthly, whosoever belongeth to any Church is someway called, and all which are so are “called in one hope of their calling:” the same reward of eternal life is promised unto every person, and we all “through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.” They, therefore, which depend upon the same God, and worship him all for the same end, “the hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began,” having all the same expectation, may well be reputed the same Church. And this is the unity of hope.

Fifthly, they which are all of one mind, whatsoever the number of their persons be, they are, in reference to that mind, but one; as all the members, howsoever different, yet being animated by one soul, become one body. Charity is of a fastening and uniting nature; nor can we call those many who “endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” “By this (said our Saviour) shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” And this is the unity of charity.

Lastly, all the Churches of God are united into one by the unity of discipline and government, by virtue whereof the same Christ ruleth in them all. For they have all the same pastoral guides appointed, authorized, sanctified, and set apart by the appointment of God, by the direction of the Spirit, to direct and lead the people of God in the same way of eternal salvation. As, therefore, there is no Church where there is no order, no ministry, so where the same order and ministry is, there is the same Church. And this is the unity of regiment and discipline.

By these means and for these reasons millions of persons and multitudes of congregations are united into one body, and become one Church. And thus, under the name of Church expressed in this article, I understand a body or collection of human persons professing faith in Christ, gathered together in several places of the world for the worship of the same God, and united into the same corporation by the means aforesaid. And this I conceive sufficient to declare the true notion of the

Church, as such, which is here the object of our faith; it remaineth, therefore, that we next consider the existence of the Church, which is acknowledged in the act of faith applied to this object. For when I profess and say, “I believe a Church,” it is not only an acknowledgment of a Church which hath been, or of a Church which shall be, but also of that which is. When I say, “I believe in Christ dead,” I acknowledge that death which once was, and now is not; for Christ once died, but now is not dead. When I say, “I believe the resurrection of the body,” I acknowledge that which never yet was, and is not now, but shall hereafter be. Thus the act of faith is applicated to the object according to the nature of it; to what is already past, as past; to what is to come, as still to come; to that which is present, as it is still present. Now that which was then past when the creed was made must necessarily be always past, and so believed for ever; that which shall never come to pass until the end of the world, when this public profession of faith shall cease, that must for ever be believed as still to come. But that which was when the creed began, and was to continue till that creed shall end, is proposed to our belief in every age as being; and thus, ever since the first Church was constituted, the Church itself, as being, was the object of the faith of the Church believing.

The existence, therefore, of the Church of Christ (as that Church before is understood by us) is the continuation of it in an actual being, from the first collection in the apostles' times unto the consummation of all things. And therefore, to make good this explication of the article, it will be necessary to prove that the Church, which our Saviour founded and the apostles gathered, was to receive a constant and perpetual accession, and, by a successive augmentation, be uninterruptedly continued in an actual existence of believing persons and congregations in all ages unto the end of the world.

Now this, indeed, is a proper object of faith, because it is grounded only upon the promise of God; there can be no other assurance of the perpetuity of this Church but what we have from him that built it. The Church is not of such a nature as would necessarily, once begun, preserve itself for ever. Many thousand persons have fallen totally and finally from the faith professed, and so apostatized from the Church. Many particular Churches have been wholly lost, many candlesticks have been removed; neither is there any particular Church which hath any power to continue itself more or longer than others; and, consequently, if all particulars be defectible, the universal Church must also be subject of itself unto the same defectibility.

But though the providence of God doth suffer many particular Churches to cease, yet the promise of the same God will never permit that all of them at once shall perish. When Christ spake first particularly to St. Peter, he sealed his speech with a powerful promise of perpetuity, saying—"Thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." When he spake generally to all the rest of the apostles to the same purpose—"Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," he added a promise to the same effect—"And lo I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." The first of these promises assureth us of the continuance of the Church, because it is built upon a rock; for our Saviour had expressed this before—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock." The Church of Christ is the house of Christ, for he hath "builded the house," and is as a "Son over his own house, whose house are we;" and as a wise man, he hath built his house upon a rock, and what is so built shall not fall. The latter of these promises giveth not only an assurance of the continuance of the Church, but also the cause of that continuance, which is the presence of Christ. "Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ," there he is in the "midst of them;" and thereby they become a Church, for they are as a builded house, and the Son within that house. Wherefore, being Christ doth promise his presence unto the Church, even to the end of the world, he doth thereby assure us of the existence of the Church until that time, of which his presence is the cause. Indeed, this is "the city of the Lord of hosts, the city of our God; God will establish it for ever;" as the great Prophet of the Church hath said.

Upon the certainty of this truth the existence of the Church hath been propounded as an object of our faith in every age of Christianity; and so it shall be still unto the end of the world. For those which are believers are the Church; and therefore, if they do believe, they must believe there is a Church. And thus, having showed in what the nature of a Church consisteth, and proved that a Church of that nature is of perpetual and indefectible existence, by virtue of the promises of Christ, I have done all which can be necessary for the explication of this part of the article—"I believe the Church."

After the consideration of that which is the subject in this

article followeth the explications of the affections thereof; which are two, sanctity and universality—the one attributed unto it by the apostles, the other by the Fathers of the Church; by the first, the Church is denominated Holy—by the second, Catholic. Now the Church which we have described may be called holy in several respects, and for several reasons:—First, in reference to the vocation by which all the members thereof are called, and separated from the rest of the world to God, which separation, in the language of the Scriptures, is a sanctification: and so, the calling being holy (for “God hath called us with an holy calling”), the body which is separated and congregated thereby may well be termed holy. Secondly, in relation to the offices appointed and the powers exercised in the Church, which, by their institution and operation, are holy, that Church for which they were appointed, and in which they are exercised, may be called holy. Thirdly, because whosoever is called to profess faith in Christ is thereby engaged to holiness of life, according to the words of the apostle—“Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity:” for those namers of the name, or named by the name of Christ are such as called on his name; and that was the description of the Church, as when Saul did persecute the Church, it is said he had “authority from the chief priests to bind all that called upon the name of Christ;” and when he “preached Christ in the synagogue, all that heard him said, Is not this he who destroyed them which called on his name in Jerusalem?” Being, then, all within the Church are by their profession obliged to such holiness of life, in respect of this obligation, the whole Church may be termed holy. Fourthly, in regard the end of constituting a Church in God was for the purchasing an holy and a precious people, and the great design thereof was for the begetting and increasing holiness; that as God is originally holy in himself, so he might communicate his sanctity to the sons of men, whom he intended to bring unto the fruition of himself; unto which, without a previous sanctification, they can never approach, because “without holiness no man shall ever see God.”

For these four reasons, the whole Church of God, as it containeth in it all the persons which were called to the profession of the faith of Christ, or were baptized in his name, may well be termed and believed holy. But the apostle hath delivered another kind of holiness, which cannot belong unto the Church, taken in so great a latitude. “For (saith he) Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that he might

present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish." Now, though it may be conceived that Christ did love the whole Church, as it did any way contain all such as ever called upon his name, and did give himself for all of them, yet we cannot imagine that the whole body of all men could ever be so holy as to be without spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing. It will be therefore necessary, within the great complex body of the universal Church, to find that Church to which this absolute holiness doth belong; and to this purpose it will be fit to consider both the difference of the persons contained in the Church, as it hath been hitherto described, while they continue in this life, and their different conditions after death; whereby we shall at last discover in what persons this holiness is inherent really, in what condition it is inherent perfectly, and, consequently, in what other sense it may be truly and properly affirmed that the Church is holy.

Where, first, we must observe, that the Church, as it embraceth all the professors of the true faith of Christ, containeth in it not only such as do truly believe and are obedient to the word, but those also which are hypocrites and profane. Many profess the faith which have no true belief; many have some kind of faith which live with no correspondence to the Gospel preached. Within, therefore, the notion of the Church are comprehended good and bad, being both externally called, and both professing the same faith. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a field, in which wheat and tares grow together into the harvest—like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind—like unto a store, in which are laid up wheat and chaff—like unto a marriage feast, in which some have on the wedding garment, and some not. This is that ark of Noah in which were preserved beasts clean and unclean. This is that "great house, in which there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honour, and some to dishonour." There are many called, of all which the Church consisteth, but there are few chosen of those which are called, and thereby within the Church. I conclude, therefore, as the ancient Catholics did against the Donatists, that within the Church, in the public profession and external communion thereof, are contained persons truly good and sanctified, and hereafter saved; and together with them other persons void of all saving grace, and hereafter to be damned.

Of these promiscuously contained in the Church, such as are void of all saving grace while they live, and communicate with the rest of the Church, when they pass out of this life, die

in their sins, and remain under the eternal wrath of God; as they were not in their persons holy while they lived, so are they no way of the Church after their death, neither as members of it, nor as contained in it. Through their own demerit they fall short of the glory unto which they were called, and being by death separated from the external communion of the Church, and having no true internal communion with the members and the head thereof, are totally and finally cut off from the Church of Christ. On the contrary, such as are efficaciously called, justified, and sanctified, while they live are truly holy, and when they die are perfectly holy: nor are they by their death separated from the Church, but remain united still, by virtue of that internal union by which they were before conjoined both to the members and the head. As therefore the Church is truly holy, not only by an holiness of institution, but also by a personal sanctity in reference to the saints while they live, so is it also perfectly holy in relation to the same saints glorified in heaven. And at the end of the world, when all the wicked shall be turned into hell, and, consequently, all cut off from the communion of the Church—when the members of the Church remaining, being perfectly sanctified, shall be eternally glorified, then shall the whole Church be truly and perfectly holy.

Then shall that be completely fulfilled, that “Christ shall present unto himself a glorious Church, which shall be holy and without blemish.” Not that there are two Churches of Christ—one in which good and bad are mingled together, another in which there are good alone; one in which the saints are imperfectly holy, another in which they are perfectly such; but one and the same Church, in relation to different times, admitteth or not admitteth the permision of the wicked, or the imperfection of the godly. To conclude, the Church of God is universally holy in respect of all, by institutions and administrations of sanctity; the same Church is really holy in this world, in relation to all godly persons contained in it, by a real infused sanctity; the same is further yet, at the same time, perfectly holy, in reference to the saints departed and admitted to the presence of God; and the same Church shall hereafter be most completely holy in the world to come, when all the members actually belonging to it shall be at once perfected in holiness and completed in happiness. And thus I conceive the affection of sanctity sufficiently explicated.

The next affection of the Church is that of universality—“I believe the Holy Catholic Church.” Now the word Catholic, as it is not read in the Scriptures, so was it not anciently in the creed (as we have already shown), but, being inserted by the

Church, must necessarily be interpreted by the sense which the most ancient Fathers had of it, and that sense must be confirmed, so far as it is consentient with the Scriptures. To grant, then, that the word was not used by the apostles, we must also acknowledge that it was most anciently in use among the primitive Fathers, and that as to several intents. For, first, they called the Epistles of St. James, St. Peter, St. John, St. Jude, the Catholic Epistles, because when the Epistles written by St. Paul were directed to particular Churches congregated in particular cities, these were either sent to the Churches dispersed through a great part of the world, or directed to the whole Church of God upon the face of the whole earth. Again, we observe the Fathers to use the word Catholic for nothing else but general or universal, in the ordinary or vulgar sense; as the Catholic resurrection is the resurrection of all men, the Catholic opinion the opinion of all men. Sometimes it was used as a word of state, signifying an officer which collected the emperor's revenue in several provinces united into one diocese; who, because there were particular officers belonging to the particular provinces, and all under him, was therefore called the Catholicus, as general procurator of them all, from whence that title was by some transferred upon the Christian patriarchs.

When this title is attributed to the Church it hath not always the same notion or signification; for when by the Church is understood the house of God, or place in which the worship of God is performed, then by the Catholic Church is meant no more than the common church into which all such persons as belonged to that parish in which it was built were wont to congregate. For where monasteries were in use, as there were separate habitations for men and distinct for women, so were there also churches for each district; and in the parishes where there was no distinction of sexes as to habitation, there was a common church which received them both: and therefore called Catholic.

Again, when the Church is taken for the persons making profession of the Christian faith, the Catholic is often added in opposition to heretics and schismatics, expressing a particular Church continuing in the true faith with the rest of the Church of God; as the Catholic Church in Smyrna, the Catholic Church in Alexandria.

Now being these particular Churches could not be named Catholic, as they were particular in reference to this or that city in which they were congregated, it followeth that they were called Catholic by their coherence and conjunction with that Church which was properly and originally called so; which is

the Church taken in that acceptation which we have already delivered. That Church which was built upon the apostles as upon the foundation, congregated by their preaching and by their baptizing, receiving continual accession, and disseminated in several parts of the earth, containing within it numerous congregations, all which were truly called Churches, as members of the same Church ; that Church, I say, was after some time called the Catholic Church, that is to say, the name Catholic was used by the Greeks to signify the whole. For being every particular congregation professing the name of Christ was from the beginning called a Church--being likewise all such congregations, considered together, were originally comprehended under the name of the Church--being these two notions of the word were different, it came to pass that, for distinction sake, at first they called the Church, taken in the large and comprehensive sense, by as large and comprehensive a name--the Catholic Church.

Although this seem the first intention of those which gave the name Catholic to the Church, to signify thereby nothing else but the whole or universal Church, yet those which followed did signify by the same that affection of the Church which floweth from the nature of it, and may be expressed by that word. At first they called the whole Church Catholic, meaning no more than the universal Church ; but having used that term some space of time, they considered how the nature of the Church was to be universal, and in what that universality did consist.

As far, then, as the ancient Fathers have expressed themselves, and as far as their expressions are agreeable with the descriptions of the Church delivered in the Scriptures, so far, I conceive, we may safely conclude that the Church of Christ is truly Catholic, and that the truly Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ, which must necessarily be sufficient for the explication of this affection, which we acknowledge when we say—"We believe the Catholic Church."

The most obvious and most general notion of this Catholicism consisteth in the diffusiveness of the Church, grounded upon the commission given to the builders of it—"Go, teach all nations ;" whereby they and their successors were authorized and empowered to gather congregations of believers, and so to extend the borders of the Church unto the utmost parts of the earth. The synagogue of the Jews especially consisted of one nation, and the public worship of God was confined to one country—"In Judah was God known, and his name was great in Israel ; in Salem was his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place

in Sion. He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel ; he hath not dealt so with any nation." The temple was the only place in which the sacrifices could be offered, in which the priests could perform their office of ministration ; and so, under the law, there was an enclosure divided from all the world beside. But God said unto his Son—"I will give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." And Christ commanded the apostles, saying—" Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature ; that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Thus the Church of Christ, in its primary institution, was made to be of a diffusive nature, to spread and extend itself from the city of Jerusalem, where it first began, to all the parts and corners of the earth. From whence we find them in the Revelation crying to the Lamb—" Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." This reason did the ancient Fathers render why the Church was called Catholic, and the nature of the Church is so described in the Scriptures.

Secondly, they called the Church of Christ the Catholic Church, because it teacheth all things which are necessary for a Christian to know, whether they be things in heaven or things in earth, whether they concern the condition of man in this life or in the life to come. As the Holy Ghost did lead the apostles into all truth, so did the apostles leave all truth unto the Church, which, teaching all the same, may well be called Catholic, from the universality of necessary and saving truths retained in it.

Thirdly, the Church hath been thought fit to be called Catholic in reference to the universal obedience which it prescribeth, both in respect of the persons, obliging men of all conditions, and in relation to the precepts, requiring the performance of all the evangelical commands.

Fourthly, the Church hath been yet further called or reputed Catholic by reason of all graces given in it, whereby all diseases of the soul are healed, and spiritual virtues are disseminated ; all the works, and words, and thoughts of men are regulated, till we become perfect men in Christ Jesus.

In all these four acceptations did some of the ancient Fathers understand the Church of Christ to be Catholic, and every one of them doth certainly belong unto it. Wherefore I conclude that this Catholicism, or second affection of the Church, consisteth generally in universality ; as embracing all sorts of persons, as to be disseminated through all nations, as comprehending all

ages, as containing all necessary and saving truths, as obliging all conditions of men to all kind of obedience, as curing all diseases, and planting all graces in the souls of men.

The necessity of believing the Holy Catholic Church appeareth first in this—that Christ hath appointed it as the only way unto eternal life. We read at the first that “the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved;” and what was then daily done hath been done since continually. Christ never appointed two ways to heaven, nor did he build a Church to save some, and make another institution for other men’s salvation. “There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus;” and that name is no otherwise given under heaven than in the Church. As none were saved from the deluge but such as were within the ark of Noah, framed for their reception by the command of God; as none of the first-born of Egypt lived, but such as were within those habitations whose door-posts were sprinkled with blood, by the appointment of God for their preservation; as none of the inhabitants of Jericho could escape the fire or sword, but such as were within the house of Rahab, for whose protection a covenant was made; so none shall ever escape the eternal wrath of God which belong not to the Church of God. This is the congregation of those persons here on earth, which shall hereafter meet in heaven. These are the vessels of the tabernacle carried up and down, at last to be translated into and fixed in the temple.

Secondly, it is necessary to believe the Church of Christ, which is but one, that, being in it, we may take care never to cast ourselves, or be ejected out of it. There is a power within the Church to cast out those which do belong to it; for if any “neglect to hear the Church (saith our Saviour), let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.” By great and scandalous offences, by incorrigible misdemeanours, we may incur the censure of the Church of God, and while we are shut out by them we stand excluded out of heaven. For our Saviour said to his apostles, upon whom he built his Church—“Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” Again, a man may not only passively and involuntarily be rejected, but also may, by an act of his own, cast out or reject himself, not only by plain and complete apostasy, but by a defection from the unity of truth, falling into some damnable heresy, or by an active separation deserting all which are in communion with the Catholic Church, and falling into an irrecoverable schism.

Thirdly, it is necessary to believe the Church of Christ to be

holy, lest we should presume to obtain any happiness by being of it without that holiness which is required in it. It is not enough that the end, institution, and administration of the Church are holy; but, that there may be some real and permanent advantage received by it, it is necessary that the persons abiding in the communion of it should be really and effectually sanctified. Without which holiness the privileges of the Church prove the greatest disadvantages, and the means of salvation neglected tend to a punishment with aggravation. It is not only vain, but pernicious to attend at the marriage feast without a wedding garment; and it is our Saviour's description of folly to cry, "Lord, Lord, open unto us," while we are without oil in our lamps. We must acknowledge a necessity of holiness when we confess that Church alone which is holy can make us happy.

Fourthly, there is a necessity of believing the Catholic Church, because, except a man be of that, he can be of none. For being the Church, which is truly Catholic, containeth within it all which are truly Churches, whosoever is not of the Catholic Church cannot be of the true Church. That Church alone which first began at Jerusalem on earth will bring us to the Jerusalem in heaven; and that alone began there which always embraceth "the faith once delivered to the saints." Whatsoever Church pretendeth to a new beginning, pretendeth, at the same time, to a new Churchdom, and whatsoever is so new is none. So necessary it is to believe the Holy Catholic Church.

Having thus far explicated the first part of this article, I conceive every person sufficiently furnished with means of instruction what they ought to intend when they profess to believe the Holy Catholic Church. For thereby every one is understood to declare thus much:—I am fully persuaded and make a free confession of this, as of a necessary and infallible truth, that Christ, by the preaching of the apostles, did gather unto himself a Church, consisting of thousands of believing persons and numerous congregations, to which he daily added such as should be saved, and will successively and daily add unto the same unto the end of the world; so that, by the virtue of his all-sufficient promise, I am assured that there was, has been hitherto, and now is, and hereafter shall be, so long as the sun and moon endure, a Church of Christ, one and the same. This Church I believe in general holy, in respect of the author, end, institution, and administration of it; particularly in the members here I acknowledge it really, and in the same hereafter perfectly, holy. I look upon this Church not like that of

the Jews, limited to one people, confined to one nation; but, by the appointment and command of Christ, and by the efficacy of his assisting power, to be disseminated through all nations, to be extended to all places, to be propagated to all ages, to contain in it all truths necessary to be known, to exact absolute obedience from all men to the commands of Christ, and to furnish us with all graces necessary to make our persons acceptable, and our actions well-pleasing in the sight of God. And thus I believe the Holy Catholic Church.

OBEDIENCE TO ECCLESIASTICAL RULERS.

BY THE RT. REV. WM. WARBURTON, D.D., BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

MATTHEW xxiii. 2, 3.

The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's seat. All, therefore, whatsoe'er they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not.

THE Scribes and Pharisees, the public teachers of the law, were now fallen into that depravity of manners which the law had foretold and condemned, and consequently sunk into that general neglect which is ever the lot of profligate instructors, whether set over us by civil or divine appointment.

An impostor, who had a new system to introduce upon the established, thus shaken by the corrupt morals of its teachers, would certainly have improved so favourable a circumstance, by inflaming the general aversion against those who most stood in his way. But the Son of God declined this advantage: on the contrary, he reproved this popular prejudice, though so friendly to his own mission, and endeavoured to reconcile them to their teachers, his inveterate enemies, on such rational principles as best affirmed the people's obedience and their directors' authority. Secure in his own virtue, he rejected the obliquities of human policy; and, in order to rectify the error on which the mischiefs of a despised authority subsist, he instructs his hearers to distinguish between the public and private character of the teacher. He shows them, that though men, who "say, and do not," should never be followed for examples; yet that ministers of religion, who "sit in Moses's chair," and are invested with authority to teach the law, are to be attended to as instructors, when, in their office, they denounce and enforce the ordinances of God. Nothing appears more reasonable than this distinction.

And yet, in another place of the same evangelist, our holy Master seems to insinuate a very different doctrine. " Beware (says he) of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit;

but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

Here, we see, it is expressly said, that they whose morals do not correspond to the purity of their doctrine shall have no regard or observance paid unto them, but shall be shunned and avoided as deceivers, because the corruption of their manners is a sufficient proof of the imposture of their pretences. " Beware of false prophets." " Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles ?" On the other hand, our text instructs us to reverence the immoral teacher, and to separate his manners from his doctrine : " All, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do ; but do not ye after their works."

To reconcile these two places of Scripture it will be sufficient to observe, that very different persons and characters are the subjects of these two different directions.

They of my text were an order of established teachers, with whom the custody of God's word was entrusted, to be dispensed on all occasions to the people. These men had grossly abused indeed, but yet not forfeited, their trust ; and, therefore, it was the part of every good citizen to support them in their character. And though the Jewish economy was now near the eve of its dissolution—when part was to be abolished, part to be reformed, and the remaining part to be completed, by the last revelation of God's will, entrusted to his Son—yet the dignity of truth, and the eminence of that Person who came to bring truth into the world, required that the interests even of an expiring dispensation should not be neglected.

But the false prophets mentioned in the other Scripture, who come in sheep's clothing, but with wolfish dispositions, and therefore to be shunned and avoided as deceivers, are such as assume a very different character—the character of God's extraordinary messengers, entrusted with the delivery of a new revelation to mankind. For about this time the expectation of the promised Messiah was very general : so that selfish and ambitious men were encouraged to personate his character ; though the marks by which they are described might, one would think, have prevented the mischiefs the delusions drew upon this infatuated people.

Having now seen the perfect agreement of the different rules delivered in these two Scriptures, let us enquire into the reasons of them.

In the caution against false prophets it is directed, that, in case the morals of a pretended messenger from God be inconsistent with his office, we should shun and avoid him as a cheat. And surely with much reason ; the very nature of things in-

forming us, that, when God thinks fit to reveal his will, in an extraordinary way, to man, he will not disgrace his dispensation by an unworthy instrument. Both the dignity and the interests of religion require that the first bearer of it should be thoroughly possessed of that power of virtue which true religion bestows.

It is highly absurd to fancy that so bright an emanation from the source of light and purity, as divine grace and favour, should be conveyed to us through unclean and polluted hands. Neither would the Author of good endure the near approach and intercourse of such an agent; neither could the good he bestows be so conveyed, without stain and defilement.

The interests of religion will not suffer so impure a conveyance. In propagating a new religion there are many corrupt prejudices to overcome. To see, therefore, the messenger of God untouched with the importance of his high commission, and unrenewed himself with the renovation he conveys to others, would afford those prejudices too much aid and assistance.

But this sanctity of manners, which is so expedient to support the honour and interests of the mission, is indeed the natural and inseparable attendant on the office: for, in the promulgation of a new religion, besides those marks of truth arising from the reasonableness and purity of the doctrine, which show it worthy of God, to prove it actually came from him there is need of certain miraculous gifts, which the Holy Spirit imparts to those with whom he then condescends to dwell. But the peculiar office of the Holy Spirit is the sanctification of the heart.

From all this we must conclude, that when our blessed Master warns us to reject all such for impostors who pretend to an extraordinary commission from God, with morals unsuitable to their message, he doth it upon the best grounds of truth and expediency.

But now we must be careful to observe, that the case of such is very different from theirs, whom God, in the ordinary course of his providence, raiseth up, from time to time, as the bare instruments of a reformation in religion, and who pretend to no higher character; of whose agency Providence avails itself, to free an old-established religion from the errors contracted through length of time and the malice of men. Here the same conclusion will not hold, most of those circumstances being wanting which made the inconsistency between the public and private character of the extraordinary agent; and God, now administering the affairs of his Church by the settled economy

of his common providence, may sometimes be well supposed to do here, as in the rest of his moral dispensations, to produce good out of evil, to use wicked instruments in the natural course of things, to promote the ends of virtue, and make the oblique interests of the world serve to advance the honour and to restore the purity of his laws.

Of this different conduct the Jewish history affords us an example. When God, at various periods, revealed his will to particular families, and to his chosen people, the agents and messengers whom he honoured with his commands were selected from the most virtuous amongst men, such as Noah, Abraham, and Moses. But when, during the established order of things, he decreed, in the course of his providence, either to execute vengeance on the oppressors of his people, to purge the holy land from idolatry, or to punish the transgressors of the law, he frequently employed the agency of wicked kings and rulers to bring his judgments to their proposed issue. But we need not wonder at this designation, when we see Providence did not disdain to employ the like imperfect instruments in a work that approached still nearer to the dignity of the first operation of divine love—I mean the establishment of religion; of which, that of the law was committed to David, and that of the Gospel to Constantine.

This our adversaries of the Church of Rome do not sufficiently consider, when, with so much triumph against the work of reformation, they object to us those impure instruments, who had neither motives nor manners suitable to the truth or purity of that Gospel faith which they pretended to restore. We are so far from being ashamed of receiving benefit from men who supply these circumstances of reproach to themselves, that, supported by the general principle arising from the doctrines of these two texts, as here reconciled and explained, we find, in the perversity of man, new matter of glory to God. And we bless the hand which turned the avarice of a furious friar, and the luxury of a debauched monarch, from their natural mischiefs, to become instruments of the choicest blessings—the recovery of letters and the restoration of religion.

Indeed, it would be hard to conceive a reason why this kind of dispensation should not be esteemed as adorable in the religious government of the world as it is in the moral; where we see, and without hesitation acknowledge the goodness, the power, and the wisdom of God, whose providence is incessantly employed in turning the crimes and passions of selfish men to the advancement of public justice. How many wholesome laws

have had their birth from the oblique views of interested ministers!—how many salutary enforcements of them from the blind passions of disappointed factions!

Indeed, if we should so far mistake, or rather abuse, these blessings, as to turn our gratitude or repose our trust upon the instruments, instead of the Sovereign Hand which guided them, their vileness might then be fairly objected to us; but while we are careful to give the honour where it is due, none of that just reproach which may fall upon the instrument will at all affect the glorious work it was employed to produce.

So far as to the reasonableness of the caution against false prophets. But now, as to the respect due to immoral ministers, or the appointed teachers of the established religion, who lie under the same imputation of discrediting their doctrine by their practice, we shall show their case to be very different, and consequently that the different reception, which my text directs us to afford them, is equally reasonable.

“Whatsoever (says the text) they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do you not after their works; for they say, and do not.” That is, as they are appointed to dispense unto you the doctrines and precepts of religion, and to support and enforce them with all the power of their wit and eloquence, attend to them, as to a public character, with reverence; but shun their ways, and forbear to imitate their practice, which stands condemned by their own contrary professions. In a word, receive them for your instructors, but beware of taking them for your examples.

The fitness and reasonableness of this direction may be seen both from the necessity and the nature of the office.

1. We learn from the experience of all ages, that, to preserve religion amongst the people, there is need of public teachers to be set apart for that purpose. Thus, in the Jewish state, they were appointed by God’s particular direction; amongst the policed nations of paganism, by the civil magistrate: and wherever our holy religion hath got footing, both divine and human authority have concurred to their establishment. The office, therefore, of the ministers of a national religion, like ours, is to support and cultivate that revelation which the first messengers of it, by their extraordinary graces, had planted and disseminated throughout the world. For its divinity being once thus powerfully evinced, all that remained for the constant exercise of the ministry was to have the exterior evidence of its truth and the interior evidence of its excellence set in the fairest and most convincing light. And, as this might be done by the common aids of reason and grace, the power of **miracles**,

as no longer necessary, was withdrawn from the teachers of religion. So that it was now no matter of wonder, though it will always be of scandal, if men, equally subject with their hearers to the common infirmities of their nature, should, in more degenerate times, fall under the same vassalage to sin and corruption. However, that this will not excuse their hearers from rejecting their ministry and disregarding their doctrine, appears plainly from the second consideration—the nature of their office.

2. Whoever assumes to instruct and direct the people upon the footing of his own authority hath need to be irreproachable in his life and conversation, because the truth of what he delivers rests upon the integrity of his character. Fraudulent and corrupt manners very justly discredit all he would recommend. And though his prevarication cannot alter the nature of things, yet it seems to acquit his hearers for their neglect of him, and for declining to examine what he delivers on his own personal authority. This was the case of the ancient philosophers. While the first of them practised the virtues suitable to their name and title, they were treated with regard and reverence; but when, in after times, they became as notorious for their immoralities, they deservedly sunk into general neglect. The first Christian apologists urge their vices home upon them, and consider the popular contempt into which they were fallen as the natural consequence of their profligate manners; for even uncultivated reason tells us, that it is absurd to expect grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles.

But a minister of established religion stands upon another footing. He delivers nothing on his own authority. His office is to enforce God's established truth by argument and persuasion. The guide he recommends is not himself, but holy Scripture; which he invites all men diligently to study and examine. And if, in aid of his general office, he maketh one part of his ministry to consist in interpreting what he thinks may minister grace to the hearers, it is but to assist them in their knowledge of God's word, and to weigh the force of what he offers in behalf of its authority. Now what have the private morals of such a character further to do in this matter, than to excite the compassion of every charitable hearer, who cannot but lament that so much science and application to holy things, as is necessary to fit him for the discharge of his employment, should not have force enough to subdue his evil habits?

But if, on this account, we do unreasonably to set at nought a minister of Christ, how absurd is it to encourage or excuse ourselves in our vices by his bad example. We reject the

authority he has from God; we resist the evidence he draws from reason, yet seem to respect in him the works of the flesh and the tyranny of enslaving passions.

But of all the delusions into which licentious men are apt to fall, the most unhappy sure is that which, from the vices and imperfections of the ministers of the Gospel, inclines them to reject, or entertain suspicions of, that religion itself they are entrusted to teach; and yet I believe nothing has more contributed to keep men attached to their infidelity than this foolish prejudice.

Did the Gospel deliver, or was it suspected to deliver, any doctrines even of the remotest tendency to encourage its ministers in their vices, much might be said for this strange conclusion. But when it is by those very doctrines that the people discover the true nature and enormity of vice—when it is by those doctrines they hear the preachers condemned out of their own mouths, it seems strangely perverse to think amiss of religion on that account. Surely these men of reason have not brought themselves to expect that, in the ordinary course of God's providence, a mere knowledge of his will, and of the truths arising from it, should have a resistless force to bear down inveterate habits, and subdue the strongest bent of human inclination.

In conclusion, I have only one caution to subjoin, that what is here said of the prejudices and perversities of the hearers of the word be not mistaken as intended for an excuse of the immoral preachers of it. Their guilt admits of none. Against them, under the names of the Scribes and Pharisees of my text, Jesus, in the same place where he vindicates their public character from contempt, hath denounced the severest woe of offended heaven: “Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; how can you escape the damnation of hell?” But when he speaks still more directly to the ministers of his own religion, his condemnation goes still higher. “It is impossible (says he to his disciples) but that offences will come, but woe unto him through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.” The woe denounced against the ministers of the Mosaic law was for offences arising from enormous crimes; but this against the ministers of the Gospel is for offences occasioned even by indiscretions. “Whoever (says he) shall offend one of these little ones;” and this with the highest reason, both on account of the superior holiness of the Gospel, and the superior charity required of its followers.

In a word, the crime of a profligate life in the stewards of the mysteries of God is aggravated by many considerations.

The acquired knowledge necessary for the ordinary discharge of their office gives them advantages, in religious wisdom, above other men; so that, if their progress in virtue be not proportionable to their superior knowledge of its nature and effects, they become very guilty before God; who, by the mouth of his Son, has assured us, that "to whom much is given, from him much will be required."

Their solemn dedication and separation to the service of religion likewise demands a more especial sanctity of manners. The very heathens saw that such as were employed about holy things ought to be endowed with, or, at least, should learn to acquire, a higher degree of purity than those who stood further from the altar; and, accordingly, public authority exacted from them the observance of a stricter and severer rule of moral conduct.

The sum of all is this, that the hearer should not entertain prejudices against religion on account of the bad life of the preacher; nor, on the other hand, should the clergy suffer these unjust prejudices of the laity to abate their horror for a faithless discharge of their trust. Let them equally concur in confessing the divine original of virtue and religion, in the midst of all their abuses of both; let them concur to give glory to God, while each lies humbled under the deep sense of his own condemnation.

F A S T I N G.

BY THE RIGHT REV. J. HACKET, D.D., BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY.

NEHEMIAH i. 4.

And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

WE have many solemn days in the year to remember the noble works of our Saviour; but the Church hath set forth no proper day to mind us how he will come to judgment in the end of the world. Is not that an oversight, will some say, that there is no red letter in the calendar to bring the object of that mighty judgment before us, that it may not be forgotten? Hear the reason, and I know you will excuse it. All the beneficial works of our Saviour came to pass upon certain days of the year, whose revolution is known, or easily guessed at; and those days are exactly kept with holy diligence. But for the day of judgment, it is kept secret, so that the angels of heaven are ignorant of it. Therefore, to keep one solemn day recurrent every year, for an admonition that such a dreadful hour is to come, were, in a sort, to prescribe God to an appointed time, who must not be prescribed.

If any press it further, and say, shall we then have no solemn opportunity to learn that capital lesson, that Christ will come in the clouds with power and great glory, to call the earth before him?—far be that omission from us. For to what end serves a public fast, but to prepare us all to hear that voice—“Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye forth to meet him.” This is the day wherein every tender conscience should feel the axe laid to the root of the tree. Now the whole kingdom stands, as it were, at the bar, to be arraigned before the majesty of God. We come to call ourselves to judgment before Christ calls us, to prevent him. Here we are met, not to justify ourselves (O God, forbid), but to confess the evil we have done, that we may not suffer the evil we have deserved. They are mighty sins which we come to

deplore; not only the iniquities of this place, though great and exemplary; not the sins of the great city alone, though it abound in people and wickedness; but the innumerable, contagious, crying sins of this nation, of this England, for which, and whose pardon, we come to make our mournful supplication.

Now, to teach you to steer your course by a godly instance, I lay my matter among the servants of God in the land of Judah, of whom I could have told you, that when they were in fear of bad neighbours round about them, kept a general humiliation for all the people (Nehem. ix. 1). The people fasted in sack-cloth, and cast ashes upon their heads. But I know where I am; and I will rather instruct you from the pattern of Nehemiah, called the Tirshata, a mighty prince among the people, who was so zealous for the prosperity of his country that you can scarce match him with all that went before him. Moses was the grandfather of Israel, that brought them out of the captivity of Egypt; Nehemiah was their co-founder or foster-father, who repaired the ruins of the captivity of Babylon. The text shows what he did, in the beginning of his zeal, to appease the anger of the Lord. In two general parts I will discover his piety, and the wound of his heart, and the cure of that wound; the occasion of his humiliation, and the humiliation itself. The wound of his heart was given by evil tidings—"It came to pass, when I heard these words:" which afflicted him two ways; first, for the ruins which the land had suffered; secondly, for the impediments of its reparation. The cure of the wound consists in five degrees of humiliation:—1. He sat down; 2. He wept; 3. He mourned certain days; 4. He fasted; 5. He prayed before the God of heaven. That God that gives many medicines to heal the sickness of the body hath provided these sacred remedies to heal the troubles of the soul. I rise up now from the first step—Nehemiah was sore perplexed to hear what the land had suffered.

His humiliation shall now be offered to your instruction in five passes or degrees, beginning with his posture of sorrow, that "he sat down." I call it a posture of sorrow, for so it is in this place. In cases of great heaviness it doth not signify to repose the body in a seat of ease, but to sink down to the ground, and to sit upon the earth. His legs could not bear the weight of his sorrows, and he cast himself upon the ground. You shall have some texts of Scripture to confirm it. Job, overladen with misery, sat down among the ashes. The king of Nineveh, in dread of God's anger, rose up from his throne, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And when the evil day of captivity was coming, the daughter of Sion

sat upon the ground. So that, in the first place, you see, Nehemiah began at the right end, abasing himself to this vile element upon which we tread, and expounding the Lord's word in his own practice—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

In the seasons of joy and prosperity it is hard to bring a man into a right meditation what he is. Then his imaginations are upon a pinnacle, or he is flying in the air. I hope, therefore, you will take out this lesson better a great deal upon this day of common affliction. Now I trust you will perceive that this tabernacle of flesh, in all the spangles and trappings of pride, is but a muck-hill, or such rubbish as we stop our nose at in the dung-cart; or, at the best, that which the cleanly will not endure in their chambers, dust. Therefore affliction is most natural to us, which brings us to our proper centre, and makes us sit upon the earth. As who should say—we are but worms creeping upon the ground; enter not into judgment with thy servants, who are nothing in thy sight? O where can we find so fit a place to receive us, considering the abundance of iniquity which is in us, as the bare ground? Is there any pure metal in us? Are we not all dross? And whither should that be cast but into the highways? Do we not dishonour the name of Christian, and turn the grace of God to wantonness? And if the salt have lost his savour, is it good for anything but to be cast out and trodden under foot?

But, alas! we are ill prepared for this godly exercise of affliction. There is no thought in this age of sitting down upon the ground. Our ears are deaf to our Saviour's lesson, "Go and sit down in the lowest room." This is a parable, and we lust not to know the meaning. David says, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, that I am not able to look up;" but our iniquities do take such hold of us, that we do nothing but look up. Was ever ambition so forward as in these times? What striving, what straining to come aloft. Yet if aspiring after promotion brought no other mischief but this one to the soul, it were enough to condemn it, that it carries a man into a strange land, quite into another region, far distant from humility, or from godly sorrow and repentance; it knows not the way to sit down and to be dejected to the earth; and yet to none else but such will our Saviour say, "Friend, go up higher."

A third instruction upon this point is, that to sit down is to muse, and to consider sadly of that which is brought before us. So Nehemiah sat down to call his soul to counsel; he intermitted all worldly business, and composed himself to think of the judgments of God. It is well that the royal piety hath called

us together to-day upon so good an occasion. Here is a senate of God's servants gathered together in this holy place, and in all other houses of God throughout this realm. Now we are set to it, to call our ways to remembrance, to revolve in our mind, both every one apart, how far we have corrupted our ways, and likewise have taken this pause of time, and sequestered ourselves from all secular affairs, to take a considerate view upon the sins of the kingdom ; how near we are in all likelihood to relapse into some great troubles, because the fear of the Lord is not much conspicuous among any sorts of men.

Are our peers and nobles renowned for their advancement and protection of true honour and virtue as their great ancestors have been ? Sit down and think upon it. The reverend sages of the law, are their minds set upon righteousness ? And do they judge the thing that is right with courage and integrity ? Sit down and think upon it. The portion and tribe of God, the holy clergy, do they remember, or can they forget, how they were lately trodden down, reviled, and cast out of all they had for twenty years ? And doth it stir us up to be burning and shining lights more than ever, and to double our diligence now in prayer, and preaching, and administering the holy sacraments ? Sit down and think upon it. For the gentry, are they not addicted to waste and riot ? Do they not crowd themselves into our enlarged suburbs, where they have no calling, but to emulate one another in excess of feminine pride and rude debauchery ? Sit down and think upon it. As for what concerns the great city, not to rub it with salt and satyrs, is it not as palpable as God's light that it did poison the whole land with rebellion, and still infects it with gaudiness, gluttony, whoredoms, and falsehoods ? Sit down and think upon it. Do the country villages deserve the old commendations of simplicity and innocence ? But how ignorant are they in the knowledge of salvation ! How unthankful to God in all seasons ! How hath Satan bewitched them, of late years, into dissolute lives and drunkenness ! Sit down and think upon it. I pass over many things in silence, as not fit for publication.

Now though I have shown you an ocean of ungodliness breaking in upon us, who almost, unless such an extraordinary day as this doth spur them on, who doth consider it and muse upon it with a leisurable sorrow ? The most will shake their heads at it, and give it a shrug, and then they are at their furthest. There is all the regard they have when the sins of a whole nation look as if they were white for harvest. It is too tedious for them to sit down, to cast up a solicitous account, to survey the parcels of our crimes, to cast them up into a total

sum, as much as is possible. This is too long labour for them, who are very busy a doing nothing. They will sit down, as the Israelites did, to eat and to drink, and rise up to play. Whereas the beginning of true repentance is to allot some time day by day for considering our own works seriously, and the criminal faults of the whole land. Grant some good hours for the serious understanding of those things, and run not away lightly from such holy thoughts; but possess Nehemiah's room, sit down, and ponder the judgments of the Lord.

It follows, in the second branch of his penitential carriage, that the sins and desolation of Jerusalem wrought upon him so far that he wept. Perhaps some sturdy spirit will say, "Woman, what ailest thou to weep?" A manly courage thinks shame of it. Nay, it is childish, as some conceive, to put the finger into the eye. Indeed, how can a child help itself, when it is offended, but by crying? But when our heavenly Father is offended, it is a sweet sign of grace to demean ourselves like children, and cry. "Except you become as little children, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Nay (says David), I have brought my soul low, like a weaned child;" and yet he was no coward. He became as a child, and not such an one as hath the breast, and is still; but as a weaned child, taken from the comforts and lullabies of the nurse—and then, you know, it will burst into tears.

It is apostolical, by the instance of St. Paul—"There are many that walk, of whom I have told you before, and now I tell you weeping, they are enemies to the cross of Christ." Even those superstitious ones that fall down before the sign of the cross, they are enemies to the cross. Many of them walk among us; too many, God help it; their idols and images, I fear, will bring a curse upon the land. If St. Paul were alive, he would tell us, weeping, that they are enemies to the redemption obtained by Christ. And weeping for sin is prophetical. Jeremiah was never satisfied with weeping for the deplorable state of the Jews—"O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears." The most that we can do is to wish for such a tender and compassionate soul. It is to be wished, I say, but few there be that can overcome themselves to perform it. As Leo said of his days—"Men are but little touched with anything that God doth to us in his justice or his mercy." We have neither spiritual joy, when God forgives us our sins, nor penitent compunction, when he corrects us for our sins.

Onward now to the next point, the third part of that remedy with which Nehemiah used to cure the wound of a troubled soul. Says he, "I mourned certain days." The heavenly water

which fell from his eyes brought forth no weeds, but sad and serious repentance, which ejected all light joy. The Israelites, in their days of distress, had some outward badges of mourning; as covering the head and lip, not washing the face, not combing the hair, putting on sackcloth or other sad raiment, or such like. Which, whether they were to be seen in Nehemiah, as I cannot affirm, so I will not deny; for I incline to persuade myself, that he wanted not those outward marks and habiliments of sorrow, that the habit and grisly uncomposedness of his body might utter the affections of his mind.

I may not forget the continuance of Nehemiah's mourning—it lasted certain days. As a watery moon breeds foul weather for a whole month after, so, when he began to be a mourner for the sins and scourges of his people, he persevered till it came to some magnitude of afflictive compunction. Nothing will come to any large increase in an hour; therefore he produced his sorrow longer and longer, and mourned certain days. Not first a sigh, and suddenly a flux of laughter upon it; not humbled in fasting to-day, and pampering the body in all excess and riot to-morrow. Are there none here that will be so fickle, and change so soon? God grant it. For a short acquaintance with godliness is soon forgotten. He that catcheth at repentance by sudden fits will never lay hold of it. Insist upon good motions, protract them to-day, and to-morrow, and continue many such days together, that piety may have its perfect course. When you will scarce hold out the length of an hour, nay, hardly the length of the Lord's prayer, but your mind is drawn off from the survey of repentance, you have done as good as nothing. They that first did distribute apt times and seasons in the Church for the service of God, contrived forty days together in Lent for religious sorrow and humiliation—a long time of perseverance, indeed, that we might be perfect in the lesson; as Moses continued forty days together in the mount, that he might be perfect in the law of the Lord. All that I bend towards in my instruction is this, that forasmuch as we have but this one day allotted for our exercise of extraordinary prayer and mortification, the benefit may disspread unto to-morrow, and the morrow after, and so spin it out, that we may keep time with Nehemiah, and say we have mourned certain days.

But why hath he not expressed how long he continued in this sad habit of repentance? "I mourned certain days." And wherefore are his certain days so uncertain? Because he did not keep reckoning with God, and take a precise account how much service he did him, as the Pharisee had it at his fingers' ends—"I fast twice a week;" and as the most are perfect

to number their few good deeds—"I give so much yearly to the poor, I frequent the holy communion so often, I go now and then on working days to morning prayer." And perhaps, before night, some will break out into boasting how many hours they have spent at church upon this solemn fast. This is to serve God by weight and measure, and to score up every good minute we have spent, lest the Lord should forget it. But Nehemiah doth not make ostentation of the just length of time which he spent in devotion and sorrow, but closeth it up indefinitely in this manner—"I mourned certain days."

And this mourning drew on another exercise of religious affliction, which denominates the piety of this day—he fasted. It is very proper that this partner should go hand in hand with mourning. "I wept and chastened myself with fasting," says David. A pensive mind will seldom have a hungry stomach; true sorrow will make a man forget to eat his bread. Some will not deny that there is a harmony between fasting and mourning not to be broken, but they cannot abide to come under the penance of fasting, and then they shut mourning out of doors, because it wants its mate. But the libertine maunders—"Fasting, what is that to the advantage of repentance? The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink. If we eat, we are not the worse; and if we eat not, we are not the better. And what God hath given us freely, why is our liberty abridged, that we may not use it when we will?"

I answer, none is more firmly enfeoffed of anything than the husband is of the wife, and the wife of the husband: and yet they may keep asunder with consent for a time, that they may give themselves to fasting and prayer. So the Lord hath given us the earth, and the fulness of it; but it is expedient sometimes, as on this day, to abstain from meats, that the spirit may be the stronger to work by the subjection of the body. It is a means, both upon the extraordinariness of it, to make us look exactly into the bottom of our conscience, as also to elevate the mind, and to make it more capable of heavenly thoughts. As we see it in St. Peter—he fasted, and fell into a trance, and saw that vision, happy for us, the calling of the Gentiles. So Daniel eat no pleasant bread, nor drank wine for three weeks, and he was the better composed for those prophetical revelations which were imparted to him. It is not the bare abstinence from meats, take it alone by itself, that pleaseth God; but as it is in conjunction with other holy duties—as to dispose the body to chastity, and to heighten up the mind to the contemplation of heavenly things. That you may know the right fast from the wrong, there are three to one in whom there is no profit at

all. 1. The hypocrite abstains from meats, and looks sadly, not that he may cast himself down before God, but that he may exalt his name among men. 2. The niggard fasts, and torments his body to spare his purse. 3. The poor man fasts, because he hath not wherewithal to relieve his hunger. These are not within the compass of religion. But 4. The devout man fasts, to give his soul the true bias of penance and mourning, and to testify before heaven and earth that nothing shall comfort him but the mercy of God, whom he hath offended.

I come now to particularize in the sphere of our nation. First, if there were no other sin among us (but woe and alas ! we abound with a great deal more), but if we had no other fault, yet the strange intolerable luxury brought in in these consuming days, the great mystery of cookery, utterly unknown to the laudable hospitality of our forefathers—this wanton, aromatic, ambergris diet (what should I call it ?)—doth it not deserve to be expiated by a public fast ? Doth it not require that we should set aside all manner of food for one day till even ? As good men and temperate were ashamed to eat for necessity, because costly palates are so profusely lavish in superfluity. Let us confess, and declare in act, that we deserve not that which God hath given us ; let us subscribe, by this humiliation, that we have forfeited that right and dominion which we had in the creatures, and that we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under our Master's table.

Secondly, we dwell in a land upon which the heaven doth cast its most propitious influence ; it is the true Canaan of the western world, flowing with so much plenty, that I have oftener heard it grumbled at, that it brought forth too much, than that it brought forth too little. Either it brings forth all manner of store, or all manner of store by commodious navigation is brought into it. And how unthankful have we been for this most bounteous sustenance. How slack in our acknowledgment that God hath opened the windows of heaven, to rain down plenty upon us. Is it not fit, therefore, that we should do justice upon ourselves, forbear, and touch no more food, until we have sanctified a fast, and made an atonement for our ingratitude, and pressed it upon ourselves to be more thankful ?

Thirdly, the poor and needy have been neglected by us ; they have been almost famished when we have surfeited, and they have wanted that which the rich men's dogs have devoured. O, therefore, chastise your bodies with hunger at this once, that you may avenge the injuries which you have done to the poor upon your own flesh. Cornelius, the centurion, fasted and gave alms : “ Whereupon (says St. Austin) Cornelius, when himself

fasted, fed others who had no meat, that their replenishing might make his fast the more acceptable to God." So this day you must feed the poor out of your own bellies, and whatsoever you spare from your meal, spend it on them, and you shall feed your Saviour in them.

And as fasting is a pious occasion, thereby to ask pardon of God for our gluttony, our unthankfulness to God, our hard-heartedness to the poor, so, fourthly, I would it might work some good amendment upon our most scandalous drunkenness. I profess I have little hope that that sin is corrigible among us. For I believe, verily, I make my account right, that we spend three hundred cups of wine in these days, in this kingdom, for one that was spent when I was a child. Therefore, to dehort from this debauchery, I shall but put new wine into old bottles—religious instruction before old unreclaimable drunkards. These bottles are stopped, and will never receive my doctrine. They had rather be swine than men; horse-leeches that are always sucking at corruption. He that cares not, by over-quaffing himself, to lose his reason, the most precious thing that is in the soul of man, he is so drowned in intemperance, that, till he hates that vice, and casts it off, he deceives himself if he thinks he can set any true valuation upon the grace of God. But O that this holy fast might reclaim those in this most conspicuous place of the whole kingdom who are prone to be overwhelmed in the dead sea of drink! That you would fear lest God should take you away when you are so pitifully overtaken! That you would remember how they who inflame themselves with wine now, shall hereafter want a drop of water to cool their tongues in hell-fire!

Yet for all those who forget themselves in that or in any other manner, we keep this public fast to remember God in their behalf. To call a public fast is to draw a solemn profession from the tongues of all men, in the behalf of all men. So do we for those who, out of stubbornness and frivolous exceptions against our liturgy, will not join with us in this Church duty; so we do for those who, out of blindness in a superstitious breeding, had rather mutter they know not what in an unknown tongue, than pray with us in that language wherein they may be comforted and edified; so we do for those who, out of profaneness and atheism, think not of these things, and have no affection to bear a part in common supplications. We fast for all these to-day as for ourselves, desiring God, as it is in our litany, that he will have mercy upon all men. The sick that desire to join with us in prayer, and cannot come—infants and sucklings, whose tongues are not yet framed to magnify the

Lord—we represent all these, and include them in our faithful and charitable supplications; for ourselves and for all these we pray to our heavenly Father, that as we spread not our table this noon, so he will fit us against night to eat our meal with a good conscience, with confidence and comfort that he hath restored us to all his blessings again: and though we have been prodigal children, yet we shall be brought into our Father's house, to eat the bread of life and the fatted calf, even Jesus Christ. A fast is commonly the eve before some holiday, and I pray to God that this public fast may be such, the eve, or fore-running day to joyful times to come; and so it will be, if, as sure as this is a fast, the time to come be observed with all diligence, as holy to the Lord.

And now in the conclusion of all, that you may know that Nehemiah fulfilled all righteousness for Jerusalem's sake, when so many exercises of humiliation had gone before, in the upshot he prayed before the God of heaven. Weeping, and mourning, and fasting are about prayer like prickles about a rose. But as no sweet rose is without prickles, so no powerful prayer is without these, or some of these. But this is the rose, this is the flower of religion, this is the odour of sweet incense that ascends up before the Lord. It delivers our message like an ambassador in the sanctuary of God, whither corruptible flesh and blood cannot enter. For as the winds and air have free access unto those places which are immured and watched, that no foot of man can approach unto them, so, though a cherubim brandish a flaming sword before Paradise, that the seed of mortal man cannot come to it without destruction, yet our prayers are spirits and angels, that fly upon the wings of the wind, and come boldly to that place where God is wonderful, in light inaccessible. A poor whelp hath found out a way by nature to lick itself whole with its tongue when it is bitten or wounded; so, when we are oppressed with any evil of sin or of punishment, our tongue is our instrument to lick the sore. Call upon the Lord in the time of trouble, and he will hear thee and help thee.

Yet very much goes to it to make prayer speeding and effectual. Go unto the house of the Lord as often as you can, and join in humble petition, with the spirit of the whole Church, with the congregation of saints, and bring your mind with you as well as your body, your zeal as well as your voice. Observe your constant times of private prayer, at least every morning and every evening (if oftener the better). Cast yourself upon your knees with a resolved preparation to be a faithful, a penitent, an earnest suppliant; intermit not this practice for any worldly

avocation, either to serve yourself, or to serve your friends, and I can tell you this will bring such admirable effects to pass, when you have got the habit and perseverance of that virtue, as I durst not name, but that the Spirit of God hath got assurance of it. It will give you knowledge of divine things, when you will wonder how you learnt them ; it will pick the thorns of concupiscence out of your flesh, when you will marvel how you were rid of them ; it will give you courage in dangers, when there is small hope to escape ; and content, when desire is not obtained ; and cheerfulness, when everything that should procure joy is far from you. It is grace and peace, health and wealth, and every good thing that concerns this life and a better. Only ask, seek, and knock ; ask with confidence, seek with diligence, knock with perseverance. No father, if his child ask him bread, will give him a stone ; or if he ask a fish, will give him a scorpion. If they that are evil give good things, how much more will your heavenly Father ? If we ask him victory, he will not give us a defeat ; if we ask him peace, he will not give us a continuance of war ; if we ask him for justice, he will not give us oppression ; if we ask him for the continuance of true religion, he will not give us idolatry and superstition. But ask zealously, faithfully, devoutly, with love unfeigned, with a clean heart, as becometh saints. For if you ask amiss, you shall go without.

Look towards the pattern of Nehemiah : he was one of great integrity and uprightness, and therefore fit to carry the petitions of all the people in his lips to God. He prayed before God, not like a hypocrite, to be seen of men. He set God always before him, assured that he was present to hear his words and to see his ways. But they that have the itch of the Pharisees, to draw the eyes of men upon them, the Lord will turn away his face, and reject their prayers. He prayed before the God of heaven, he did not pray to the saints in heaven. “No, (says Friar Walden) we confess that none of the just men in the Old Testament did ever pray to any saint departed, partly because the souls of the righteous were not admitted unto the vision of God in heaven, before Christ, by his ascension, did open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.” Even as much then as now, for aught he knows ; and how much or how little, either then or now, it is hard for him or us to know. But his second reason is, that the Jews were kept from the custom of praying to the saints, lest they should run into idolatry. I thank him for that caution, for that misled practice of praying to saints is a symptom of idolatry. Let us direct our petitions to the Lord alone, in whom we have assurance that he doth hear us, and will help us. “I have said unto the Lord, Thou

art my God ; hear the voice of my prayer, O Lord." Is there any precept in Scripture that gives the least perfunctory admonition to pray to saints ? None. Is there any example in the book of God of any of his servants that did it ? None. The rich glutton was a reprobate, that called out of hell upon **Abraham**. Is there any promise annexed to invocation of saints, that God will bless it ? None. Then happy are they that keep close to the religion of Nehemiah, who prayed before the God of heaven.

OF RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. GEORGE SMALRIDGE, D. D., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

1 COR. xiv. 40.

Let all things be done decently, and in order.

THERE are very many and very strong reasons why we should reverence the memory of the first Reformers of our Church, why we should speak of them with veneration, and why we should thank God for those wonderful things which he wrought by them, for the good of his Church and for the honour of his holy name ; but there is no one thing for which they are more deservedly to be reverenced, because there is no one thing which more manifests their great prudence, their sound judgment, and their extraordinary moderation, than this—that in the reforming of those abuses that had crept into the Church, they religiously observed that golden mean which is nicely and scrupulously to be observed in all matters that are of weight and moment, which it is very difficult for those who do aim at it always to compass, which none but very wise men do so much as aim at, but which, when carefully aimed at and happily compassed, is sure to be approved and admired by all judicious observers.

This nice regard of our blessed Reformers to keep the middle way between extremes which are too easily run into, and which are always attended with ill consequences, was the reason that, when they proposed to correct those errors which had overrun the Christian Church, they did not rashly and peremptorily resolve to change everything which they found established and received in the age wherein they lived ; but weighing all things with the utmost calmness, the most exact temper, and most mature deliberation, what, after the best judgment they could form, they perceived to be erroneous either in faith, worship, or discipline, that they restored to its primitive purity : what was found unblameable and incorrupt, that they themselves inviolably kept, and, with great faithfulness, delivered down to their posterity. Hence it was, that when they shook off the

intolerable yoke of Papacy—a burden under which their fore-fathers had long groaned, and which, being both in itself usurped and injurious, and also in the exercise of it very fatal to the interests of Christ's pure and holy religion, they were so far from being bound any longer to bear, that they were in conscience obliged to cast it off—they still retained the primitive, the apostolical, I may add, the divine institution of Episcopacy. Hence also was it, that when they threw out those prayers and other parts of worship that had anything in them savouring superstition or idolatry, yet they retained the use of public liturgies and set forms of prayer, as most conducing to the honour of God, to the beauty of holiness, and to the edification of men's souls. Hence, lastly, it was, that when they utterly abolished such rites and ceremonies as were either in the use of them unlawful, or for their excessive number overburdensome, or for their insignificancy trifling, they still reserved such as were in their nature free from all blame, and in their kind fitted and adapted for the ornament of God's public worship and for the advancement and furtherance of external religion; which two words, in the sense fixed upon them by all sober Christians, they did not think God had put asunder, or that they might not join together.

Now, in order to remove any doubts that may be entertained concerning the lawfulness of our ceremonies, it will be proper to enquire—

I. Whether any Church can of right oblige its subjects to the use of any rites and ceremonies; and—

II. Whether our Church in particular hath a right to oblige her subjects to the practice of those which she hath especially enjoined.

For it will be to no purpose for us to defend our ceremonies as innocent and lawful, if there be any blemish, which belongs to all rites, and makes all criminal and unlawful; and, on the other side, it will be to no purpose to prove that some rites may lawfully be enjoined, and, being enjoined, may be innocently complied with, if our particular rites have in them some especial faults from which others are free; so that, though other rites might be innocent, yet these particular ones are unjustifiable, unlawful, and intolerable.

Now in order to show that the Church hath a power to prescribe rites and ceremonies, and to require of its subjects a dutiful compliance with them; and that the governors of the Church may, in some cases, add new laws to those of Christ, without divesting him of his empire in his own kingdom, or setting the obedience of his subjects loose from himself; it is to

be observed, that there are some things which belong to the essence of divine worship, some which are accidental to it; the former are so necessary, that without them our worship cannot be entire; the latter, where they are used, serve for an ornament to it, but it might barely subsist without them. The former being prescribed by God and revealed in holy writ, are perpetual and unchangeable; the latter depending upon the pleasure of men may be different, according to the variety of different times and places. Concerning the former, we and those who separate from us are agreed; concerning the latter, there is between us some difference in our practice, because there is a difference in opinion. They profess to admit nothing in the worship of God, which God himself hath not prescribed; we own that nothing which God hath commanded may be omitted, but we think that something which God hath not commanded may be used. For whatever is to be observed by us, whatsoever we do at our own choice, or by the direction of others, we think to be either necessary, unlawful, or indifferent. What any law, to the observance of which we are bound, requires to be done, that we judge necessary, so that we cannot omit it without transgression of our bounden duty; what any law, obliging us, forbids to be done, that we judge unlawful, so that we cannot do it without sin; what no law, which we are bound by, either commands or forbids, that we judge indifferent, so that we may either do it or leave it undone, without incurring any guilt. When, therefore, it is pretended that an action is necessary, he who pleads for its necessity must show some law which commands it; when it is urged that an action is sinful, he who accuses it of sin, must show some law which prohibits it; but when the question is, whether an action be indifferent or not, we must judge of this indifference not by the declaration of the law, but by its silence. For we are taught by the apostle, that “where no law is, there can be no trasgression:” there is no law that forbids what is indifferent, it being the very notion of indifferent neither to be required or forbid; it may, therefore, be practised without danger of sinning. It is not, therefore, reasonable to require of those who defend the use of some religious rites and ceremonies, to produce some express text of Scripture which enjoins such ceremonies, but it belongs to those who condemn the use of them to show us some direct precept which forbids them. For what the Scriptures do not prohibit to be done, that may be done agreeably with the direction of the Scriptures; what the governors of the Church require to be done, that, if by the rules of Scripture it may be done, must be done; if it be not forbidden, it is required by

virtue of those general precepts which require our obedience to our lawful governors, commanding lawful things.

Who that God is whom alone we are to worship, with what affections of mind we ought to worship him, with what devotion of soul and humiliation of body we are to perform our worship to him, we are perfectly instructed by the Scriptures; but concerning the circumstances of worship, in what place we shall meet together to worship him, at what times we shall assemble at such place, what particular gesture of body we shall use, what habit he who officiates shall wear in the public worship, the Scriptures nowhere teach. Either, therefore, we may lawfully do something which the Scriptures do not expressly command, or it is not lawful for us to worship God at any fixed time, or to say our prayers together in any appointed place, because the Scriptures have nowhere determined the hour of the day when we should meet to worship God, or the precise place where we should pray unto him. Those who differ from us do so far yield to the force of this argument as to acknowledge, that those circumstances, without which the worship of God cannot be administered, are to be left to the determination of our governors, and that, therefore, they have an authority to appoint the time when and the place where Christians ought to assemble together for public worship; but they seem not to be consistent with themselves, when they will not allow any power to the Church to determine anything concerning the gesture or habit of those who attend or minister at the public worship. For the Scriptures have no more given rules in the one case than in the other; they have no more abridged the authority of governors in one case than in the other; so that, if nothing be lawful in the worship of God but what the Scriptures have prescribed, if that liberty which is left us by the Scriptures may not be restrained by the governors of the Church, if it be an invasion of the kingdom of Christ, and an usurpation upon our Christian liberty to be tied up where Christ hath left us free, our Christian liberty is as much invaded by that injunction which requires that we should say our prayers rather at nine o'clock in the Church than at one o'clock in the market-place, as it is by that ecclesiastical precept which requires the minister to be clothed in a white garment rather than in a black one, or the receiver of the sacrament to receive it kneeling, and not sitting or standing.

The apostles, by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit, have given us some general rules concerning the worship of God; that "all things should be done decently, and in order," that "all things be done to edifying," we are taught by the inspired

writers; but what is decent, what is orderly, what tends to edification, they have left to the determination of those who succeed them in the care and government of the Church. For those things which are in their own nature variable and uncertain are not proper to be fixed by one invariable rule; what is decent in one place and in one age, may, through the diversity of opinions and customs, be indecent in another place and in another age. The apostle St. Paul thought it comely for men to be uncovered, for women to be covered, at the celebration of divine worship; the mode of their praying or prophesying was very different—but in both cases regard was had to decency. Since, therefore, so great regard is to be had to decorum in public worship; since that depends upon the manners and sentiments of men; since those manners and sentiments are different amongst different people, and not at all times the same amongst people of the same country; since private Christians may differ in their opinions of decency, and such differences are noways to be removed but by the public judgment of those who have authority in the Church, we ought not to expect from the Scriptures fixed and determined rules concerning such particularities as these, but are to obey the Scriptures, which require us, in such indifferent things, to submit ourselves to those who rule over us, and watch for our souls, as they that must give an account of the expedience of their commands, we being answerable only for the lawfulness of them.

There will be no room for obedience to authority, there can be no place left for our observing those precepts concerning subjection to our governors, which are so often repeated, so plainly expressed, and so warmly inculcated throughout the Scriptures, if we will not allow the governors to interpose their authority in such things as in themselves are confessed to be indifferent. What the Scriptures command, that we are obliged to, though our governors should not require it, or though they should forbid it; what the Scriptures prohibit, that, though the Church should exact it, we may not do, because we are to obey God rather than men. Either, therefore, the governors of the Church have authority in prescribing indifferent rites and ceremonies, or they have no authority at all. That they have no original, absolute, despotic authority over the consciences of men, is readily acknowledged; but that they have a derived, delegated, limited authority in such things as God hath left undetermined by any rules of Scripture, so that their decisions, when noways repugnant to God's word, ought to be obeyed by all their subjects, is plain from all those Scriptures which

require subjection to higher powers. Primarily and of itself, the law of God only obliges our consciences, because God only hath a direct power over the conscience; but ecclesiastical laws do also oblige us indirectly, by force of the law of God. God, by appointing governors in the Church, hath directed us to whom we ought to pay our obedience; governors, by appointing what rites and ceremonies shall be observed in the Church, do direct us in the particular instance of our obedience: when, therefore, in such cases, we obey the commands of our governors, we do not so properly obey them as God. Either, therefore, we must expunge out of holy writ all those passages which make obedience to governors a part of our Christian duty, or we must submit to their commands in the observance of such usages which God hath nowhere forbid, and which they, by that authority wherewith God hath invested them, do think it proper to enjoin.

For paying such obedience we have the examples of Christ and his apostles to warrant us, who observed many rites in the Jewish Church which were not prescribed by the law of God. We have the examples of all Christians in all ages; there never having been any Church which hath not observed some rites in the worship of God, which God himself nowhere required. We have the examples of those who dissent from us, who observe many things in the worship of God which they cannot prove to be commanded by the express letter of holy writ. Since, therefore, the Scriptures are silent concerning the particular modes of divine worship; since what is in the Scriptures neither commanded nor forbid, is so far indifferent; since laws made by lawful authority, and noways derogatory to the laws of God, do lay an obligation upon the conscience of men; since those laws of our governors, which require observances nowhere forbidden by the law of God, are noways derogatory to God's laws; since obedience to our Governors in some things is a duty; and since there is no room for the discharge of such duty but in our observance of their commands in things indifferent antecedent to such commands; since we are by the apostle required to do all things decently, and in order, and can noways attain at such decency and order but by leaving the determination of what is decent and orderly to those who are in authority; since we have the examples of all Churches, and all ages, and of the apostles, and of Christ himself, to warrant us in the observance of rites not prescribed by the law of God, I think we may venture to conclude that the Governors of the Church have authority to prescribe innocent rites and ceremonies in the public worship of God; and that if the usage of such rites cannot be proved from reason or from Scripture to be un-

lawful, they not only lawfully may, but of necessity must be complied with by such who would approve themselves good, humble, and conscientious Christians.

What hath been said thus briefly concerning the authority of governors to prescribe, and the duty of subjects to comply with rites and ceremonies not forbidden by the law of God, will be applicable to the particular rites enjoined and observed by our Church, as far as they are allowed to be noways contrary to any divine law. But because those who allow some rights to be lawful, may entertain some doubts concerning the use of ours, as apprehending them to have some particular faults which do not belong to all ceremonies in general, I shall proceed to clear those which we of this Church are required to observe, from such objections as are brought to prove them unlawful and unwarrantable. Those who scruple the use of them, allege it as one main ground of their scruples, that those ceremonies which are used in our Church are also used in the Church of Rome, and they are therefore cautious of observing them lest they should thereby countenance the errors and corruptions of that Church. Now this would be a good argument against the usage of such rites, if it could be proved that those who err in some things do certainly err in everything; or that we ought to show our abhorrence of the corruptions of a Church, by condemning and abolishing even those usages which have nothing in them but what is innocent and incorrupt. But we have not declared war against those of that Church as they are Christians, but as they are perverters of the Gospel of Christ; we dont profess to differ from them in everything, but only in such things wherein we apprehend them to have degenerated from the pure and undefiled Church of Christ. We think that we should not be able to vindicate ourselves from the charge of schism, which they bring against us, if whatever doctrine they held, whatever right they practised, that we should, for no other reason but because they held and practised it, forthwith condemn and reject.

The ablest champions for the cause of the Reformation have always thought it the best answer against the charge of schism, to allege and prove that we have no further departed from them than they departed from the pure and primitive Church of Christ. What is contrary to the purity of the Gospel, that we reject, not because Popish, but because repugnant to the laws and doctrine of Christ; what is noways contradictory to the simplicity of the Gospel, what may be subservient to piety, that we retain, not because practised by the Church of Rome, but because agreeable to the rules of the Gospel. If there be anything in our ceremonies that is sinful, they ought presently to be abolished, though there was nothing of the same kind

practised by those of the Roman communion; what is decent and laudable in them cannot lose its worth and value because others have them in common with us. If it be laid down as a good rule of Reformation that we must depart as far as possible from Rome, we must renounce the articles of our creed, because they of that Church profess to believe them; we must declare ourselves Socinians, that we may be thought staunch Protestants; and we must renounce the doctrine of the Trinity, because it is held by those who do also hold that of Transubstantiation. In the Romish religion there are some things evil, some things good, some things wholly indifferent. Whatever is sinful in that communion we are bound to reject, and have, we think, accordingly rejected; what is good we ought to retain, and therefore do retain; what was indifferent it was at the discretion of our reformers either to keep or change, as they thought should be more expedient. Private persons may, according to the variety of their judgments, think some things might have been kept, which were left off, or some things might have been dropped, which are still kept; but unless they can prove those that have been abolished to be necessary, or those that are reserved to be unlawful, they are bound quietly to submit to the abolition of the former, and to the usage of the latter.

But if our ceremonies are not in themselves directly sinful, yet may not scrupulous persons have just reason to forbear the observance of them, because such use of them might give scandal to their weak brethren? Though they themselves, in their own consciences, are fully persuaded of their innocence, yet ought they not to abstain from what is, in their opinion, lawful, because it is, in the opinion of others, unlawful? Now, were they indeed perfectly at liberty, were they entire masters of their own actions, were they not subject to the lawful commands of their superiors, they might think it an abuse of their liberty to do anything which might give scandal to any. But since there is greater scandal in neglecting what is commanded than in observing it; since as many and as conscientious persons are like to be scandalized by the omission as by the usage of such prescribed rites; since in one case the scandal is not given, but taken—in the other case it is both given and taken; since we may not omit our bounden duty for fear of offending others, but are in such a manner to practise it as may give the least offence; since our omission of what we judge to be lawful may tempt others to judge it unlawful, and by that means contribute to their entertaining injurious opinions of that authority which imposes it: the fear of giving scandal is so far from being a good ground for our non-compliance, that it is a very strong argument for our compliance. What in its own

nature hath a proper tendency to make others sin, that is truly scandalous ; but that from which such as are very foolish or very wicked may possibly take an occasion to sin, is not liable to any such imputation. One person may be scandalized with my receiving the sacrament kneeling, another may, with as good reason, be scandalized with my receiving it sitting or standing ; we must not, therefore, forbear to receive it in any posture, because, in whatever posture we receive it, some may chance to be scandalized ; because this would be, to omit a necessary duty, and thereby to be guilty of sin ourselves, in order to prevent all possibility of an imaginary sin in others.

But we are told, that since we look upon these rites to be indifferent, and those who dissent from us judge them unlawful, they therefore ought not to be enjoined. The governors of the Church by abolishing them might ease others without any injury to themselves ; for since they are acknowledged not to be essential to God's worship, they might on the one side be omitted without sin, though by the other side they cannot be practised with a good conscience. This is a consideration which doth not concern private men, but the public governors of the Church ; and we are not now enquiring what is the duty of magistrates in making laws, and by what rules they ought to proceed in prescribing ceremonies ; but what is the duty of subjects in regard to laws already made, and by what measures they ought to govern themselves in the obedience of their lawful superiors. But thus much may be said in defence of such imposed rites, that though the worship of God may be performed without such a particular rite, yet it cannot be stript of all ceremonies ; that since there are no ceremonies, which some persons may not find fault with ; since the abrogation of those which are prescribed may as justly offend some, as the imposition of them offends others, it must necessarily be left to the prudence of those who have authority in the Church to continue or relax the imposing of them, according as they in their judgment, which is as likely to be right and sound judgment as that of private men, shall think to be most for the edification of the Church of Christ. If they, out of pride, out of a desire to lord it over men's consciences, and an undue affectation of Church tyranny, or out of any other undue motive, do impose such things as they themselves are not convinced are useful and expedient, they are answerable to God for such arbitrary impositions. It is sufficient for the subject, that what is exacted of him is lawful ; and if he can be fully persuaded in his own mind of the lawfulness of it, he innocently may, he in duty must submit unto it.

That men may obey any commands of their superiors, which they in their consciences think unlawful, we are far from affirm-

ing; or that any other motives should be used to induce men to comply with the received usages of the Church, than such as are proper to inform their understandings, and to rectify their mistakes about these matters, we are far from desiring: what hath been now said hath been said with an intention to justify our own practice, by showing that the objections which are made against these usages, whatever weight they may have in the opinion of those who make them, are not of force enough to prevail upon men of sound judgment to dislike such usages, much less to leave the communion of our Church for the sake of them. Those objections which we have now considered, are levelled against all the ceremonies of our Church in common. There are some others, made against each of them severally, which we may perhaps take some other time to consider.

All the application I shall now make of what hath been said upon this subject shall be this—let us, who are convinced of the lawfulness and expedience of such rites, make a due and reverent use of them, since we know they are intended only for decency, for order, and for edification; let us use them in such a manner as may best minister to those great ends, and by our decent and religious deportment in the house of God, let us prove that they may be subservient to such noble purposes. Let us express our zeal for them rather by a dutiful observance of them ourselves, than by rash censures of those who, out of a mistaken conscience, scruple the usage of them: let our zeal bear a due proportion to the worth and price of those things which we are zealous for; let us neither undervalue them, as wholly useless and insignificant to the advancement of piety, nor overrate them, as equal to the more substantial duties of the Gospel; let us look upon them only as ornaments of worship, and not of the same dignity and intrinsic excellence as the weightier parts of the law: let us not lay as great a stress upon the cross in baptism, which is only a significant rite and symbol of our owning the faith of Christ crucified, as we do upon fighting manfully under Christ's banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil: let us not think the particular posture of body we use in receiving the sacrament of the Lord's supper a matter of the same importance as we do the posture of soul and disposition of heart wherewith we receive it: in short, let us carefully remember, and so regulate our opinions and actions as those who do remember, that the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, consisteth not so much in the use or forbearance of indifferent rites, as it doth in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

In which graces that we may more and more abound, God of his infinite mercy grant, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE ANGLICAN RITUAL.

BY THE RIGHT REV THOMAS NEWTON, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

No moral or religious truth can be more evident than that it is the duty of man, as the creature dependent and indigent, to worship God as his creator, preserver, and benefactor. And as reason is that we should worship him in private as private persons, so as members of society we are obliged to worship him in a more public manner in society. Our private devotions are left to every one's discretion, that he may make use of his own thoughts and language, or borrow and apply the compositions of others: but our public prayers, as they are designed for the use of the nation, are appointed by the wisdom and authority of the nation; and our Church is distinguished in nothing more than her excellent liturgy, which is the quintessence of ancient liturgies, and an improvement upon them; and if the Psalmist said it of the Jewish service, we may well apply it to the Christian: "O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

But blessings which are common are apt to be overlooked and neglected; and persons not rightly qualified and disposed, by hearing the best things often, come not to mind them at last. It is certain, that the duty of public prayer was never so much neglected as at present; and though the service of our Church is, without doubt, the best in the world, yet it is neither frequented as it ought to be, nor duly attended to by all those who do frequent it; and both, perhaps, for want of its being better understood. The thought occurred to me, therefore, that it might be proper, for the awakening of our attention and reminding us of our duty, to examine the frame and composition of our liturgy, as far as it can be examined in one of these discourses; to take a distinct view of the several parts of it; to enquire into their fitness and propriety, and consider what sort of behaviour is requisite and becoming, while we are performing each part of this holy exercise. Such a survey, as it must be short, so must be general, and cannot descend to many particulars. For those you must have recourse to authors who have written expressly upon the subject, such as the famous Hooker, Dr. Nicholls, Mr. Wheatly, and others. You may, however, form some judgment of the excellence of a work, by viewing only the general plan and outline of it.

Let it be, then, our first care and concern to be present at the beginning of the service. We should manifest the same

readiness and alacrity which the good Psalmist expressed, when he said, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” There is no part of our common prayer but is worthy of our attendance; and, to say the best, there is an indecency in coming late. It is not only maiming your own devotions, but you disturb others, you call off their eyes and observation, and greatly incommodate those especially who are near you.

At our first coming into church, it is usual for every one to offer up a short prayer unto God for his blessing upon our present undertaking; and the custom is very decent and laudable, provided we come, as we ought always to come, before the service begins. But if you happen to stay till afterwards, it is better omitted: you have lost time already, and you should lose no more in your private devotions, when the public offices demand your attention. Your private devotions you may exercise at another time, and in another place; but everything of a private nature must yield to what concerns the public.

As prayer is a duty which requires some preparation of mind, that we may not enter upon it abruptly or lightly, the minister begins with a solemn exhortation, which he introduces with one or more sentences of Scripture; very proper to incite and encourage returning sinners. We stand while the exhortation is read, to show our attention; and attention here is all that is required of us. Attention will beget devotion. Let us lift up our hearts unto the exhortation, the exhortation will lift up our hearts unto God.

When our minds are rightly prepared and disposed, then we confess our sins unto God; and after the confession, in natural order follows the absolution or remission of sins: and with what can our devotions begin more properly, or how can we apply for future blessings, before we have asked and are assured of pardon and forgiveness for what is past? It cannot be objected to this form of confession and absolution, that they are any relics of popery. For they were not borrowed from popish liturgies, as some other parts of our service were, but were first inserted in the second edition of the Book of Common Prayer, which was drawn up in Edward VI.’s time, with the assistance and advice of some foreign presbyterian ministers. The Popish confession and absolution are private between the penitent and the priest alone: these are public in the face of the whole congregation. The Popish absolution is authoritative and absolute in the name of the priest: this is conditional, in the name of God, to “them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel.” The confession includes both sins of omission and commission,

and is as full and particular as a general confession can be made; and it is easy, while you are confessing sins in general with others, to think of your own sins in particular. Your words are the words of the congregation; but your thoughts are your own. The confession we repeat all kneeling, as that is the posture of humiliation; but the absolution or remission of sins the priest pronounceth standing, as he is then speaking authoritatively in the name and by the commission of God. The confession we should take care and repeat after the minister, but still with an humble voice, as the exhortation directs us; but the absolution or remission of sins is to be pronounced by the priest alone, and we should attend with reverend silence, and not as the manner of some is, repeat it after him. In the confession the minister addresseth himself with us to God, but in the absolution he is speaking to us from God, and, therefore, is to speak alone, and to repeat it after him can be the effect of nothing but ignorance. We are only to declare our belief and assent in an Amen at last.

As we hope and pray for the remission of sins through the merits of Christ, so we farther recommend and enforce our petitions by praying in the form which he himself hath taught us; and as this form was given for the use of all Christians, so it is enjoined that in the public offices it should be repeated by all. The Lord's prayer always made a part of Christian worship, both public and private; and, indeed, how can we better supply the defects of human compositions than by a prayer that is confessedly of divine original? But let us take care, while we thus "honour God with our lips, that our hearts are not far from him." As we are to love God, so we should worship him, "with all the heart, and with all the mind, and with all the soul, and with all the strength."

From acts of humiliation we very properly turn to acts of praise, from acknowledging our own unworthiness to the acknowledgment of the divine attributes; and with equal propriety we praise God in the psalms and hymns, and show forth his glory, before we pray unto him in the collects, and ask for the supply of our own wants and necessities. Praise, after humiliation, is grateful vicissitude, like sunshine after rain; and minister and people mutually stir up each other with the words which good David used upon a like occasion. Having raised ourselves, as we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we give glory to them in that ancient doxology, which was in use indeed before, but hath constantly been used in the Church since the times of the Arian heresy. And then the minister calleth upon the people, "Praise ye the Lord," which is the English of Hallelujah—a word in use in the Old

and New Testament, as well as in all liturgies ; and the people, to testify their assent and readiness, answer again, “ The Lord’s name be praised.”

The ninety-fifth psalm is used by way of introduction to the rest, and was employed as such probably in the Jewish Church ; at least, as such it hath been employed now for several ages in the Christian ; and the matter is as pertinent and proper as if it had been composed for that purpose. What God threatened to the rebellious Israelites, “ that they should not enter into his rest,” is as justly applicable to disobedient Christians. The Psalms are an excellent treasure-house of all devotion for persons of all conditions, and upon all occasions. They very fitly make a part of our worship as they did formerly of the public service of the temple, and still of the Jewish synagogues ; and at the end of each we repeat the doxology to appropriate them still more to Christian worship, and of legal to improve them into evangelical offices. The use of the old translation is still retained, because the people having been long habituated to it, it would not have been easy and agreeable to change it ; and, though in some respects it may be much inferior to the new translation, yet in others it hath plainly the advantage of it, and there is no very material difference between them. It is ordered by the division of the psalms into a monthly course, that we have neither too few nor too many at a time ; and we read them more as they are more devotional than other parts of Scripture. The subjects, indeed, are various ; some penitential, some joyful, but the general strain is joy ; and even the most mournful afford some ground at least of praise : and how can we praise God more effectually and more properly than in psalms and hymns dictated by the Spirit of God ? We repeat them alternately, and we repeat them standing, as hath been the practice from the earliest ages. “ All Israel stood ” while they recited the psalms, says the sacred historian ; and erection of body is the posture of praise, and best denotes elevation of soul.

After the psalms follow the lessons and hymns ; and these are intermixed for the sake of variety, and by variety to relieve and assist the mind. For in the lessons our minds are only attentive, in the hymns they are active ; the former are more the employment of our heads, the latter of our hearts ; the former exercise our understandings, the latter require our affections. The posture of the body is also varied, as well as of the mind : for no particular posture being prescribed, we sit usually during the former, and we stand during the latter, for the same reason that we repeat the psalms standing. The Scriptures were always read in the congregations of the faithful, both Jews and Chris-

tians ; and by the appointment of two lessons every day out of each, it is so contrived that we read over the Old Testament once every year, and the New Testament thrice. Upon particular occasions, proper lessons as well as proper psalms are appointed ; so that some particular parts are appointed to be read oftener, as other some are omitted, not being of such general use and edification. Some lessons are taken out of the apocryphal books, but it was never intended to put them upon a level with Scripture ; they are read only as containing several useful good moral precepts and instructions, and having been read in the congregations from early antiquity, they could not, perhaps, at the Reformation have been entirely laid aside without giving offence. The hymns are taken from Scripture, and have, therefore, the sanction and authority of Scripture ; all except St. Ambrose's hymn called *Te Deum*, and the following canticle, "Bless ye the Lord ; praise him and magnify him for ever," which is the song of the three holy children in the fiery furnace, and is scarce ever used in our parish churches, and very seldom in our cathedrals, where the music recommends it. Of the hymn called *Te Deum*, I think it may be said with justice, that of anything uninspired, it most resembles inspiration. The thoughts are as sublime as the language is plain, and there is no human composition that approaches nearer to divine.

As "faith cometh by hearing," so after hearing the word of God, we make profession of our faith in the "Apostles' Creed," so called as being a summary of their doctrine. We rehearse it standing, to signify our resolution to stand up in its defence, and to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints ;" and we rehearse it every one aloud, "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." As the confession of faith is fitly made after the lessons, so it is made as fitly before we offer up our prayers unto God ; for, as the apostle says, "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed ?"

Our prayers begin with the Lord's prayer, as the foundation and standard of all others ; and having repeated it before as it is in St. Matthew's, we repeat it now as it is delivered in St. Luke's Gospel, without the doxology at the end. Both before and after the Lord's prayer there are several versicles and responses. Those before the Lord's prayer are to stir up our devotion, and usher in our prayers with a threefold invocation, in token of the greater earnestness, and perhaps in allusion to the Trinity, and, therefore, it is wrong for the clerk and the people to repeat it a fourth time, as is done in some congregations. Those after the Lord's prayer are taken mostly out of the Psalms, and are the sum and substance of the collects which follow.

They are, as it were, the text, and the collects are a sort of paraphrase upon them ; and it is ordered that the minister repeat them standing, I suppose, that the people may hear more distinctly when to make their proper responses.

The collects, probably, are so entitled as being collected chiefly out of Scripture and out of ancient liturgies and fathers. They are most of them of great antiquity, some being borrowed from the Greek service, but more from a work of St. Gregory the Great, who was bishop of Rome at the latter end of the sixth century, and restored Christianity in this country among our Saxon ancestors, after the British Church had been ruined, and Paganism had again overspread the land ; and they were not his productions neither, for he professeth to have borrowed them from other ancient liturgies ; so that, in all probability, they are derived to us by this channel from the first and purest ages. But they are not only valuable for their antiquity, but much more for their form and matter. We pray for ourselves, for our spiritual and temporal welfare, and then for others—for the king and the royal family, for the clergy and the people, for the parliament during their session, and finally, for all sorts and conditions of men. The compilers of our liturgy seem to have to have taken for their pattern that precept of the apostle, where he directs that “supplications and prayers be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty ; for this (says he) is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

On some occasions—as Wednesday and Friday, which are fast days, our Saviour being betrayed on the one and crucified on the other—and on Sundays when there is a larger congregation, the litany, or general supplication, is appointed to be read instead of some of the collects ; and the matter is much the same, only the litany is larger and more particular, and urged with greater reiteration and importunity. And this method of joint-supplication, the minister repeating one part and the people the other, is very ancient ; for our litany itself is so. We are indebted for it to the same person as we are for many of the collects—ours being an improvement upon St. Gregory’s, as his was upon the ancient litanies before him ; and a completer general supplication there cannot be. He must be very wandering whom it will not fix ; he must be very cold whom it will not warm ; and he must either be a very good or a very bad man, whom it will not improve, and who will not rise better from it than he came to it. It is a service almost of itself ; and

this, as well as the rest of the prayers, we repeat kneeling, to show the greater lowliness, reverence, and devotion.

After the general supplication follows the general thanksgiving; after having prayed unto God for future blessings, we return him thanks for his mercies already bestowed upon us. We had praised him before in the psalms and hymns for his glorious works of every kind: but here we thank him, properly speaking, for his goodness as to mankind in general, so to ourselves in particular. Then we sum up all our petitions in the prayer of St. Chrysostom, referring it to the divine wisdom to judge what is most expedient for us; and as several of the prayers are taken from the Latin service, this, and some others, are very fitly borrowed from the Greek, that our liturgy might participate of the beauties and excellencies of the Eastern and Western Churches, and, at the same time, we might show our willingness to hold communion with both. We conclude this first service, as St. Paul concludes one of his epistles, only we make a prayer of that which he, by his apostolical authority, pronounced as a benediction.

The second service is read only on Sundays and holidays, for then people may reasonably be supposed to be more at leisure, and more solemn offices of devotion are requisite on more solemn occasions. It was originally intended for the celebration of the Lord's supper; and, therefore, is called also the communion service, and, in most places, is still read at the communion table; and indeed it is to wished that, at least as often as it was read, there was a communion. It begins in the most proper and becoming manner, for how can we better approach the Lord's table than with the Lord's prayer? We pray next for purity of heart, for "the pure in heart shall see God;" and as this is a necessary qualification for all religious worship, so more particularly for the most solemn part of it. Then the minister rehearseth the ten commandments, and rehearseth them standing as speaking from God; and the congregation, all kneeling, beg pardon for the past and grace for the future. There follows a prayer for the king as the guardian of these and all our laws; and the collect for the day, together with the epistle and gospel, which are the choicest portions of Scripture, applicable to the times and occasions; and as the epistles are only the writings of men, but the gospels contain the discourses and actions of the Son of God, we therefore stand up at the reading of the Gospel, to show the greater regard and veneration. For the same reason that we rehearse the Apostles' Creed, or the Latin, as we may call it, after the lessons, we rehearse the Greek, or the Nicene creed, which is a larger confession of faith, after the epistle and gospel.

The confession of faith is properly succeeded by a sermon, still more to confirm our faith and improve our manners. And of the excellency of the English sermons, there is no need to say anything. They are not like the unpremeditated essays and rhapsodies of ancient or modern enthusiasm, some sense, perhaps, but much more nonsense, one part religion, and three parts rant and blasphemy, pretending to inspiration, but inspired with nothing but spiritual pride and madness. They are not like the lean homilies and legendary discourses in the Church of Rome, teaching virtues which are no virtues, and extolling saints who were no saints, or perhaps never existed. They are allowed by foreigners themselves to be superior to those of all other nations. And, indeed, of some of them, it is no more than justice to say, that they are not only the most complete treatises of morality and divinity, but also the most perfect pieces of oratory, and standards of good style and fine writing.

After the sermon, the prayer for the whole state of Christ's church militant here on earth, includes almost all that we have prayed for before; and the minister subjoins a proper collect or two, and concludes with a solemn benediction. And these, as well as the rest of the prayers, we should take care not to repeat after the minister, and thereby disturb others, but only accompany him with our minds, and at the end of each prayer answer Amen, as the rubric directs us.

You may probably have observed, that there is some repetition and tautology, and that we pray for several things again in the second service which we had prayed for before in the first; but then you should consider that these two services were not designed to be read both at the same time—the one used to be read early in the morning, and the other, beginning with the litany, some hours afterwards; and this custom is still kept up in some of our cathedral and collegiate churches. Such is the remissness and negligence of the age, that few persons would be willing to come twice: and it is a convenience and indulgence, therefore, that the prayers are read altogether at once; and whoever he be who will not attend so much at once, must really have as little taste for beauty of composition, as he has sense of the beauty of holiness.

At the conclusion of all, as well as at the beginning, it is customary for every one by himself to offer up a short prayer unto God. And then is the proper time to pay our civilities and respects one to another; and not while we are engaged, or ought to be engaged, in our addresses to God, to be exchanging salutations with men.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.

ON THE THIRD AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS.

BY THE MOST REV. THOMAS SECKER, LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

CHRISTIAN COURTESY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. RICHARD HURD, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

THE DUTY OF MORAL RECTITUDE.

BY THE REV. JOHN KETTLEWELL, B.D.

COVETOUSNESS.

BY THE REV. JOHN JORTIN, D.D., ARCHDEACON OF LONDON.

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. ZACHARY PEARCE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

THE RULE OF EQUITY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN CONYBEARE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

SELF-DENIAL.

BY THE REV. ANDREW SNAPE, D.D., PROVOST OF KING'S COLL., CAM.

INTRODUCTION.

HITHERTO we have contemplated those duties, which, though enjoined by the most awful authority, and secured by the most awful penalty, are yet such as are only reached by spiritual punishment. By spiritual punishment, we mean punishment inflicted by the divine wrath. Men may neglect the worship of the true God; they may set up idols in their hearts and worship them; they may enshrine in their affections evil habits, worldly honours, and sensual pleasures; they may offer unto these that incense which belongs only to the Creator; they may profane his name and violate his Sabbaths; they may add contempt of their earthly parents to this, despite of their heavenly Father; and though for all these things he will assuredly bring them into judgment, yet they may escape the arm of the law, and laugh at the terrors of the civil sword. But there is a point, at which, for the safety of their fellow-citizens, their career of iniquity must be stopped; and, though we have no right to punish offences which are only offences against God, because we cannot see the heart of man, yet, when the offence against God becomes an offence also against society, then the powers that are ordained of God step in and preserve or restore that peace of which he, who ordained them, is the author. It may be asked, why cannot offences against God be punished by the civil magistrate, even though not directly committed against society? The reply is, first, that offences of this nature are with difficulty brought home to the offenders; and, next, so great is the depravity of our fallen nature, that an authority which could punish the irreligious for their irreligion would not be tolerated, nor would it be easy to find hands in which it could be safely lodged. When the decalogue was published to the Jews, their government was a theocracy. God was their immediate ruler—he decided their causes by his inspired seers—he fought their battles by his divinely-assisted captains—and he punished their crimes with his own hand, by awful and visible judgments; but he knew always where to strike, and we, finite beings as we are, are not always sure of so doing. True, the wicked man is easily distinguished, and his evil deeds in many cases easily pointed out; but we have deemed it more prudent,

as well as more reverent, to leave to God alone the punishment of such men as offend only indirectly against society. But though it was not possible to mark out by law any necessary degree of reverence to God, and dutiful affection to our parents, yet the life, person, character, and property of every subject are of those things which the State can guard. He, therefore, who attacks these, puts himself not only within the meaning of God's curse, but within also the grasp of the offended law.

The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth, and, viewed in one light, the third commandments, are those upon which the criminal code of every nation is founded; and though here given by the divine authority, are yet written on the heart of man by the finger of natural conscience. The first remark that will naturally suggest itself to the mind of one contemplating this portion of the divine word, is the negative character of these precepts. It is not a command to exercise gentleness and mercy—not a precept to live chastely—not an injunction of integrity; but, in each case, a direct and positive prohibition of the most glaring crime opposed to such conduct. When we cast our eye over the Mosaic code, we shall see how many other species of violence were forbidden besides murder—how many kinds of uncleanness besides adultery—how many sorts of dishonesty besides theft. It does not appear that these ten commandments were intended to be otherwise than heads of those extensive chapters in which their various ramifications of criminality are noticed. The whole was promulgated by the same authority, enforced by the same threats, and, had not the prayers of the people interposed, the whole would have been thundered forth from Mount Sinai, by that voice at which Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake.” The mode, however, in which we should regard these commands, is to view them as explained by our Saviour in his discourses, and illustrated by him in his conduct. The first head of our remarks will naturally be the first of these four commandments—“Thou shalt not kill.” The first born man was the first murderer; the second born was the first victim. This melancholy fact shows how sin, from its infancy in the garden of Eden, shot up at once to a giant stature, stamped with the blackest of stains that man whom our first parents fondly hoped was the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head, and rewarded the transgression of Adam and Eve by leaving them alone in the world with a fratricide. How this darkest and deepest of offences was punished we know not; but we know that the vengeance of God did not slumber—“My punishment is greater than I can bear,” was the agonized cry of him on whom it fell.

Our Lord, when he asserted the spiritual nature of his kingdom, explained the spiritual requirements of his law. "God (said he) is a spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." He who looked at the heart required purity there, gentleness there, rectitude there. "Ye have heard (said he) that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Here was, indeed, a system of morality which the Jews did not expect, and would not bear to hear; yet it is the comment of the Son of God on the sixth commandment, and as such we are bound to take it. It affords us a distinction of the subject into what will bring us under the action of human law, and what will bring us under the condemnation of our own hearts, and consequently of God's law. The one we shall pass without further remark; for if we forbear from envyings and strifes we shall certainly avoid hatred and malice, nor shall we ever be likely to lift up our hand against the life of our fellow-creatures. But the second description of offence requires some notice. How strongly is the love of God manifested in this sweeping prohibition of every contrary feeling; and who had so good a title to forbid uncharitableness among men as He who had left the throne of the eternal glory to live and die for their sakes? In setting the restraint here on evil tempers, our Lord showed at once his divine wisdom and his divine authority; none but God has the power to know—none but God has the right to regulate, the hidden thoughts of man. Forgiveness of injuries, which is so constant a theme of our blessed Lord's commendation—which is the condition on which we are to receive pardon of our trespasses—is a doctrine which was comparatively new in the world. It was contrary to the received ideas of honour and dignity; it deprived mankind of a pleasure, which to the depraved heart is but too sweet—revenge; and it illustrated, to an extent which the Jews never anticipated, that solemn declaration of Almighty God, "Vengeance is mine—I will repay." The importance of this Christian view will be acknowledged when we note the effects which do follow its partial, and would follow its universal, neglect. Angry feelings, if indulged, become, like every other sinful emotion, stronger and stronger. Hatred succeeds to anger—revenge to resentment. Who shall say where, in an unsanctified heart, the march of the wrathful passions shall stop? What moral restraint shall keep him, who

begins with being angry with his brother without a cause, from finishing by inscribing his name with the blood of that brother by the side of Cain's in the book of damnation?

We hasten to the second of the four—"Thou shalt not commit adultery." Our Lord comments on this as he had done on the other: "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." This sin, which includes in our text every species of uncleanness, depends more than any other upon the imagination. Those persons who fill their minds with impure thoughts, nay, who allow them to dwell there, can hardly expect, and for the most part do not expect, their lives to be correct. "Put away, therefore (says the apostle), all filthy communication out of your mouth."

There are few vices more prevalent than this class of vices, and none more extensively destructive. In the higher ranks, they have produced a lamentable disregard of moral obligation, and the substitution of reputation for virtue. In the lower, they have been the inlet to a wide and increasing demoralization; and it is indeed too palpable that, with regard to moral excellence, our country is going downward, and Satan is reaping an abundant harvest.

He alone to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, can cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit. There is one instance on record for our instruction, of redeeming grace, in the history of Joseph; there is one instance for our warning in the history of David. He trusted too much to himself—he threw himself into temptation, and fell. Before passing to the eighth commandment, we must notice a passage which has been sometimes misunderstood. It presents an apparent difficulty, if no more. The passage to which we allude is in the history of the woman taken in adultery. "Hath no man condemned thee?" said the Saviour. "No man, Lord." "Neither do I condemn thee—go and sin no more." Our Lord's reply, "Neither do I condemn thee," seems somewhat inconsistent with the purity of his character; but when a little examined, the inconsistency and the difficulty vanish together. Our Lord spoke of a judicial condemnation; for had he spoken of that condemnation in the mind by which we express our abhorrence of sin, all had condemned her. If they did not consider her criminal, why did they bring her to Jesus that he should judge her? But as they had passed no judicial sentence upon her, so Christ also, seeing her penitence, forbore to pass sentence upon her, but mer-

cifully forgave her ; at the same time he set forth his sense of her guilt by the words, “ Go and sin no more.”

Theft is a crime so contemptible, and so certainly visited with disdain as well as punishment, that the mere suspicion of it is an insult the most galling that can be well imagined ; yet so perverse is human nature, that many persons are capable even of this, if it can be perpetrated with secrecy. There is a false standard set up in the world, by which we measure ourselves and our actions. It was the invention of heathen philosophers, and ought to be spurned from the scheme of every Christian man’s conduct. We allude to what is called the law of honour—a law by which murder and adultery are permitted, and integrity made a mere dead letter. And let us not deceive ourselves, thinking that this law is only current among the great and titled ; it has its ramifications which reach all ranks—it operates behind the counter of the tradesman, and in the workshop of the artisan. In fact, it is but the tribunal of a corrupt public opinion, to which we ought to pay no homage—from which we ought to receive no motives. The Bible is the broad-stone of honour, and he who lives up to a good profession of Christianity is the only honourable man. But though every man who wishes to be well thought of in the world is obliged to keep his hands from picking and stealing, yet in how many ways does he yet wrong his neighbour ? Does he always give him his due, even though his neighbour know not how far it extends ? There are many persons who can safely be trusted with large sums, or in very responsible situations—who are honest, not because they have any feelings of honour, or any principles of integrity, but merely because they have not the nerve, the courage to commit extensive degradations. Their hearts would allow them to commit petty larceny, though their terrors shrink from the liability to punishment. Hence, though they may be safely entrusted with large sums, they are yet not fit to be trusted with small ones. On the other hand, he who abstains, from conscientious motives, from making an unfair gain of a penny, will also abstain in greater matters. The principle which was wanting in the other case is here in active operation, and the only principle that can in all cases be depended on is the principle of religion.

The ninth commandment includes under one name, “ false witness,” every species of falsehood, and under one character, “ thy neighbour,” the whole human family. We shall briefly notice wherein the moral obligation to speak the truth lies, and on what account it is so incumbent upon us. We need not investigate with metaphysical subtlety the nature of truth, and the origin of evil, or talk about “ the fitness of things :” it is enough

for us, who profess to take the word of God for our rule, that he has enjoined truth and rectitude. His command is the highest obligation which can affect us, and when we have this we need not seek a lower; but the reasons of his so commanding us well deserve attention, for they set in a strong light the wisdom as well as the goodness of God. Not only is falsehood so opposed to the divine nature that the man stained therewith is shut out of his kingdom, but God's management of this world being in accordance with those eternal rules of truth and equity by which he has commanded us to act, it is inconsistent also with these, and therefore prejudicial both to the sinner and his fellow-creatures. Were it universally practised, society could not be held together. Confidence is the bond of union, and distrust the cause of separation.

These duties form that division of the moral law which may be called the social code, and which are so denominated as contradistinguished, on the one hand, from the enunciation of our domestic and our political duties, and, on the other, from our religious and ecclesiastical obligations. It must at the same time be observed, that all *duties* are religious duties, and must be performed, whatever they are, whether devotional, ecclesiastical, social, domestic, or political, with a view to the glory of God, remembering that “ whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

To these duties may be added that of hallowing the Sabbath, which, though a duty *sui generis*, may yet be more properly placed here than elsewhere, on account of its great social importance. Those who neglect this cannot be under the dominion of grace; and however outwardly correct they may be in their conduct, they want that foundation which alone can render their otherwise correct characters acceptable to God.

C.

CAMBRIDGE,

Good Friday, 1842.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TONGUE.

ON THE THIRD AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS.

BY THE MOST REV. THOMAS SECKER, LL.D., LORD ARCHBISHOP OF
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The Third Commandment.

THE first commandment having provided that we should worship only the one true God, and the second prohibited worshipping him in a manner so unworthy and dangerous as by images, the third proceeds to direct, that we preserve a due reverence to him in our whole conversation and behaviour. “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.” Under these words are forbidden several things which differ in their degrees of guilt.

1. The first and highest offence is, when we swear by the name of God falsely. For vanity, in Scripture, frequently means something which is not what it would appear. And hence using God’s name in vain, or to vanity, principally signifies applying it to confirm a falsehood. Doing this deliberately is one of the most shocking crimes of which we can be guilty. For taking an oath is declaring solemnly that we know ourselves to be in the presence of God, and him to be witness of what we speak. It is appealing to him that our words express the very truth of our hearts, and renouncing all title to his mercy if they do not. This it is to swear: and think then what it must be to swear falsely. In other sins men endeavour to forget God; but perjury is daring and braving the Almighty to his very face, bidding him take notice of the falsehood that we utter, and do his worst.

Now, of this dreadful crime we are guilty, if ever we swear that we do not know or believe what indeed we do, or that we do know or believe what indeed we do not—if ever, being upon our oaths, we mislead those whom we ought to inform, and give any other than the exactest and fairest account that we can of any matter concerning which we are examined. Again, if we promise upon oath to do a thing, without firmly designing to do it, or if we promise not to do a thing, without designing to abstain from it, this also is forswearing ourselves. Nay, further: provided the thing which we promise be lawful, if we do not ever after take all the care that can be reasonably expected to make our promise good, we are guilty of perjury,

and of living in it so long as we live in that neglect. If indeed a person hath sworn to do what he thought he could have done, and it proves afterwards, unexpectedly, that he cannot, such a one is chargeable only with mistake, or inconsiderateness at most. And if we either promise or threaten anything which we cannot lawfully do, making such a promise is a sin; but keeping it would be another, perhaps a greater sin, and therefore it innocently may, and in conscience ought, to be broken. But if we have promised what we may lawfully, but only cannot conveniently perform, we are by no means on that account released from our engagement, unless either we were unqualified to promise, or were deceived into promising; or the person to whom we have engaged voluntarily sets us at liberty, or the circumstances of the case be plainly and confessedly such that our promise was not originally designed to bind us in them.

You see, then, what is perjury. And you must see it is not only the directest and grossest affront to God—for which reason it is forbidden in the first table of the Ten Commandments—but the most pernicious injury to our fellow-creatures; on which account you will find it again forbidden in the second table. If persons will assert falsely upon oath, no one knows what to believe—no one's property or life is safe; and if persons will promise falsely upon oath, no one can know whom to trust—all security of government and human society, all mutual confidence in trade and commerce, in every relation and condition, is utterly at an end. With the greatest reason, therefore, are perjured wretches abhorred of all the world; and no interest of our own, no kindness or compassion for other persons, no turn or purpose of whatsoever sort to be served by it, can ever justify our swerving at all from truth, either in giving evidence or entering into engagements. Nor must we think, in such cases, to come off with equivocations, evasions, and quibbles, and imagine it innocent to deceive this way; on the contrary, the more artful and cunning our falsehoods are, the more deliberate and mischievous, and therefore the wickeder, they are. “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” And the following are the declarations of his sacred word to the upright man:—“Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle, and rest upon thy holy hill? He that speaketh the truth from his heart, and hath used no deceit with his tongue: he that sweareth unto his neighbour, and disappointeth him not, though it were to his own hindrance.” But to the perjured, “Seeing he despiseth the oath, by breaking the covenant, thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, I will recompense it upon his head.”

Let us all stand in awe of so dreadful a threatening, and avoid so horrible a guilt. Particularly at present, let all who have sworn allegiance to the king, faithfully "keep it, and that in regard to the oath of God." And let those who have not sworn remeinder, however, that merely claiming the protection of a government implies some promise of being dutiful to it in return; and that a successful rebellion would not only tempt multitudes of our fellow-subjects to perjury, but lay our country, its laws and religion, at the absolute mercy of a faith-breaking Church.

One thing more should be added here, for it cannot well be mentioned too often, that next to false swearing, false speaking and lying, whether in what we assert or what we promise, is a grievous sin, and hateful to God and man. Though we do not call on our Maker to be witness, yet he is a witness of whatever we say; and it is presumptuous wickedness to utter an untruth in the presence of the God of Truth. It is also at the same time very hurtful to other persons, and very foolish with respect to ourselves; for they who will lie to conceal their faults, or to carry their ends, are perpetually found out, disappointed and shamed, for the most part in a very little while, and then for ever after they are distrusted and disbelieved, even when they speak truth: as, indeed, who can depend upon such, or who would venture to employ them? Many other faults may be borne, so long as honesty and sincerity last, but a failure in these cannot be passed over: so just is Solomon's observation, "The lip of truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment."

2. Another way of taking God's name in vain is when we swear by it needlessly, though it be not falsely. For this also the word in vain signifies.

One way of doing so is, by rash and inconsiderate vows; for a vow, being a promise made solemnly to God, partakes of the nature of an oath. And there may possibly be sometimes good reasons for entering into this kind of engagement. But vowing to do what there is no use in doing is trifling with our Creator; making unlawful vows is directly telling him we will disobey him; making such without necessity as are difficult to keep is leading ourselves into temptation; and, indeed, making any, without much thought and prudent advice first, usually proves an unhappy snare. One vow we have all made, and were bound to make, that of our baptism, which includes every real good resolution. That, therefore, let us carefully keep, and frequently ratify, and we shall scarce have occasion to make any more.

Another very needless and always sinful use of God's name is by oaths in common discourse. Too many there are who fill up with them a great part of their most trifling conversation; especially if ever so little warmth rises in talk, then they abound in them. Now it is unavoidable, but persons who are perpetually swearing must frequently perjure themselves. But were that otherwise, it is great irreverence upon every slight thing we say to invoke God for a witness, and mix his holy and reverend name with the idlest things that come out of our mouths. And what makes this practice the more inexcusable is, that we cannot have either any advantage from it, or any natural pleasure in it. Sometimes it arises from a hastiness and impatience of temper, which is but increased by giving this vent to it; whereas it is every one's wisdom not to let it break out in any way, much less in such a way. But generally it is nothing more than a silly and profane custom, inconsiderately taken up, and there are the strongest reasons for laying it down immediately. It will make us disliked and abhorred by good persons, and scarce recommend us to the very worst. No person is the sooner believed for his frequent swearing; on the contrary, a modest, serious affirmation is always much more regarded. And if any one's character is so low that his word cannot be taken, he must think of other methods to retrieve it, for he will not at all mend matters by adding his oath ever so often over. Then, if swearing be affected as becoming, it is certainly quite otherwise, in the highest degree. The very phrases used in it, as well as the occasions on which they are used, are almost constantly absurd and foolish, and surely profaneness can never lessen the folly. Besides, they make the conversation of men shocking and hellish. They are acknowledged to be disrespectful to the company in which they are used; and if regard to their earthly superiors can restrain persons from swearing, why should not the reverence owing to our heavenly Father do it much more effectually? But, indeed, the indulgence of this sin wears off, by degrees, all sense of religion and of everything that is good.

Justly, therefore, doth our Saviour direct: "But I say unto you, swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, yea, yea, nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil." That is, avoid not only the grosser oaths, but all the silly refinements and softenings of them which men have contrived in hope to make them seem innocent; for though the name of God be not expressed, yet if

it be implied by mentioning something related to God instead of himself—indeed, whatever form is used to disguise it—the intent is the same, and the effect will be, bringing a sacred obligation into familiarity and contempt. Keep yourselves, therefore, throughout the whole of your common conversation, within the bounds of a plain affirmation or denial; for whatever goes beyond these, proceeds from a bad turn of mind, and will produce bad consequences.

If indeed we be required to swear before a magistrate or public officer, for the discovery of truth and the doing of justice, this is notwithstanding lawful; for our Saviour forbids it only in our communication, our ordinary discourse; and He himself, our great Pattern, answered upon oath to “the high priest, who abjured him by the living God.” Or, though we be not called upon by law, yet if some other weighty and extraordinary occasion should oblige us to call our Maker to witness—as St. Paul hath done in more places than one of his epistles—then also we may allowably do it, provided it be always with sincerity and reverence. For by oaths thus taken men are benefited, and the name of God not profaned, but honoured. But in our daily talk and communication with each other, it is our Saviour’s peremptory precept, “Swear not at all:” a rule so evidently right and important, that even heathens have strictly enjoined and followed it, to the shame of too many who call themselves Christians.

Together with common swearing should be mentioned another sin, very near akin to it, and almost always joined with it—that monstrous custom of cursing, in direct contradiction to all humanity, and to the express words of Scripture, “bless, and curse not.” To wish the heaviest judgments of God, and even eternal damnation, to a person, for the slightest cause, or none at all—to wish the same to ourselves, if some trifling thing that we are saying be not true, which frequently after all is not true, amounts to the most desperate impiety, if people at all consider what they say. And though they do not, it is even then thoughtlessly treating God and his laws, and the awful sanctions of them, with contempt, and blotting out of their minds all serious regard to subjects that will one day be found most serious things. “His delight was in cursing (says the psalmist), and it shall happen unto him: he loved not blessing, therefore shall it be far from him.”

3. Besides the offences already mentioned, all indecent and unfit use of God’s name in our discourse, though it be not in swearing or cursing, comes within the prohibition of this commandment. All irreverent sayings, and even thoughts, concerning

his nature and attributes, his actions and his commands, fall under the same guilt, unless we are tormented with such thoughts, whether we will or not, for then they are only an affliction, not a sin. All sorts of talk—ridiculing, misrepresenting, or inveighing against religion, or whatever is connected with it—incur the like condemnation. Nay, even want of attention in God's worship, “drawing near to him with our mouths, whilst we remove our hearts far from him,” if it be wilfully or carelessly indulged, makes us chargeable, in its degree, with the sin of taking his name in vain.

4. Though we no way profane his name ourselves, yet if we entice others to perjury and falsehood, or provoke them to rash oaths and curses, or give them any needless temptation to blaspheme God, to speak disrespectfully or think slightly of their Maker or his laws, natural or revealed—by such behaviour, also, we become accessory to the breach of this commandment, and rank ourselves with those whom it expressly declares God will not hold guiltless—that is, will not acquit, but severely punish.

Let us, therefore, be watchful to preserve continually such an awe of the Supreme Being upon our own minds, and those of all who belong to us, as may, on every occasion, effectually influence us to give him the glory due unto his name, both in our more solemn addresses to him, and in our daily words and actions. For “God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.”

The Ninth Commandment.

THE ninth commandment is connected with every one of the four which precede it; for neither the duties of superiors and inferiors, nor those amongst equals, could be tolerably practised; neither the lives of men, nor their happiness in the nearest relation of life, nor their possessions and properties, could ever be secure, if they were left exposed to those injuries of a licentious tongue which are here prohibited. This commandment, therefore, was intended partly to strengthen the foregoing ones, and partly, also, to make provision for every person's just character, on its own account, as well as for the sake of consequences. For, independently of these, we have by nature (and with reason) a great concern about our reputations; and therefore the precept, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour,” is, in all views, of much importance.

The crime at which these words principally and most expressly point is, giving false evidence in any cause or trial. And

as, in such cases, evidence hath always been given upon oath, this commandment, so far, is the same with the third, only there, perjury is forbidden as impiety against God—here, as injurious to men. Now we are guilty of this sin, if, in bearing witness, we affirm that we know or believe anything which we do not, or deny that we know or believe anything which we do, or either affirm or deny more positively than we have good grounds. Nay, if we only stifle by our silence any fact which is material, though we are not examined particularly about it, still, when we have sworn in general to speak the whole truth, we bear false witness if we designedly avoid it, especially after being asked if we are able to say anything besides relative to the point in question. For hiding a truth may as totally mislead those who are to judge as telling an untruth. Indeed, if by any means whatever we disguise the real state of the case, instead of relating it in the fairest and plainest manner that we can, we evidently transgress the intent of this commandment; and by doing it, the good name, the property, the livelihood, the life of an innocent person may be taken away, the advantages of society defeated, nay, perverted into mischiefs, and the very bonds of it dissolved. Therefore the rule of the Mosaic law is—“If a false witness rise up against any man, and testify against his brother that which is wrong, then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother, and thine eye shall not pity.” With us, indeed, the punishment extends not so far; but however mild such persons may find the penalties of human laws to be, or how artfully soever they may evade them, God hath declared, “A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.”

The commandment saith only, that we shall not bear false witness against our neighbour, but in effect it binds us equally not to bear false witness for him. For, in all trials of property, bearing witness for one party is bearing witness against the other; and in all trials for crimes, false evidence to the advantage of the person accused is to the disadvantage and ruin of right and truth, of public safety and peace, by concealing and encouraging what ought to be detected and punished.

It being thus criminal to bear false witness, it must be criminal also to draw persons into the commission of so great a sin by gifts, or promises, or threatenings, or any other method. And, in its degree, it must be criminal to bring a false accusation or false action against any one, or to make any sort of demand for which there is no reasonable ground.

Nay, further, however favourably persons are apt to think of the defendant's side, yet to defend ourselves against justice, or

even to delay it by unfair methods, is very wicked: for it ought to take place, and the sooner the better. Still, both the professors of the law and others may unquestionably say and do, for a doubtful or a bad cause, whatever can be said with truth or done with equity: for otherwise it might be thought still worse than it is, and treated worse than it deserves. But if they do in any cause what in reason ought not to be done; if they use or suggest indirect methods of defeating the intent of law; if, by false colours and glosses, by terrifying or confounding witnesses, by calumniating or ridiculing the adverse party, they endeavour to make justice itself an instrument for patronizing injustice, this is “turning judgment into gall,” as the Scripture expresses it, “and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock.”

But in a still higher degree is it so, if judges or jurymen are influenced in giving their sentence or verdict by interest, relation, friendship, hatred, compassion, party; by anything but the nature of the case, as it fairly appears to them. For designedly making a false determination, is completing all the mischief which bearing false witness only attempts. And, in a word, whoever any way promotes what is wrong, or obstructs what is right, partakes in the same sin, be it either of the parties, their evidences or agents—be it the highest magistrate or the lowest officer.

But persons may break this commandment, not only in judicial proceedings, but often full as grievously in common discourse, by raising, spreading, or countenancing false reports against others, or such as they have no sufficient cause to think true, which is the case, in part, at least, of most reports; by misrepresenting their circumstances in the world to their prejudice, or speaking without foundation to the disadvantage of their persons, understandings, accomplishments, temper, or conduct, whether charging them with faults and imperfections which do not belong to them, or taking from them good qualities and recommendations which do, or aggravating the former, or diminishing the latter; determining their characters from a single bad action or two; fixing ill names on things which are really virtuous or innocent in them; imputing their laudable behaviour to blameable or worthless motives—making no allowance for the depravity or weakness of human nature, strength of temptation, want of instruction, wicked insinuations, vicious examples. And in all these ways persons may be injured, either by open public assertions, or, more dangerously perhaps, by secret whispers, which they have no opportunity of contradicting. The scandal may be accom-

panied with strong expressions of hoping it is not true, or being very sorry for it, and warm declarations of great good-will to the party whom it concerns, all which may serve to give it a more unsuspected credit. Nay, it may be conveyed very effectually in dark hints, expressive gestures, or even affected silence; and these, as they may be equally mischievous, are not less wicked, for being more cowardly and more artful methods of defamation.

Further yet: speaking or intimating things to any person's disadvantage, though they be true, is seldom innocent: for it usually proceeds from bad principles—revenge, envy, malice, pride, censoriousness, unfair zeal for some private or party interest, or, at best, from desire of appearing to know more than others, or mere impudent fondness of talking. Now these are wretched motives for publishing what will be hurtful to one of our brethren. Sometimes, indeed, bad characters and bad actions ought to be known, but much oftener not, or not to all the world, or not by our means. And we have need to be very careful from what inducements we act in such a case. Sometimes, again, things are known already, or soon will be known, let us be ever so silent about them; and then, to be sure, we are more at liberty. But even then, to take pleasure in relating the faults of others is by no means right; and to reveal them when they can be hid, unless a very considerable reason require it, is extremely wrong.

Indeed, we should be cautious, not only what harm, but what good we say of others: for speaking too highly of their characters or circumstances, or praising them in any respect beyond truth, is bearing false witness about them, which may sometimes turn against them, and may often mislead those to whom we exalt them thus, and produce grievously bad consequences of many kinds. But the other is much the more common, and usually the more hurtful extreme.

We all think it an injury in the tenderest part when bad impressions are made on others concerning us; and therefore should conscientiously avoid doing the same injury to others. Making them designedly, without cause, is inexcusable wickedness; and even where we intend no harm, we may do a great deal. Whatever hurts, in any respect, the reputation of persons, always gives them great pain, and often doth them great prejudice, even in their most important concerns: for indeed almost everything in this world depends on character, and when once that hath suffered an imputation, for the most part, neither the persons calumniated, be they ever so innocent, can recover it completely by their own endeavours, nor the persons who have

wronged them, be they ever so desirous, restore it fully to its former state ; though certainly they, who rob others of their good name, or even without design asperse it, are full as much bound to make restitution for that as for any other damage which they cause. But were they not to hurt at all the person against whom they speak, still they hurt themselves, and lessen their power of doing good in the world ; they often hurt their innocent families by the provocations which they give ; they grieve their friends ; they set a mischievous example in society ; and, if they profess any religion, bring a dreadful reproach upon it, by a temper and behaviour so justly hateful to mankind.

It will easily be understood that, next to the raisers and spreaders of ill reports, they who encourage persons of that kind, by hearkening to them with pleasure, and by readiness of belief in what they say, contradict the intention of this commandment. Indeed we ought, far from countenancing scandal and detraction, to express, in all proper ways, our dislike of it—show the uncertainty, the improbability, the falsehood, if we can, of injurious rumours—oppose the divulging even of truths that are uncharitable—and set a pattern of giving every one his just praise.

It must now be observed further, that though undoubtedly those falsehoods are the worst which hurt others the most directly, yet falsehoods in general are hurtful and wrong. And therefore lying—all use either of words or actions, of known settled import, with purpose to deceive—is unlawful. And those offences of this kind which may seem the most harmless, have yet commonly great evil in them. Lying destroys the very end of speech, and leads us into perpetual mistakes by the very means which God intended should lead us into truth. It puts an end to all the pleasure, all the benefit, all the safety of conversation. Nobody can know on what or whom to depend. For if one person may lie, why not another ? And at this rate no justice can be done, no wickedness be prevented or punished, no business go forward. All these mischiefs will equally follow, whether untruths be told in a gross barefaced manner, or disguised under equivocations, quibbles, and evasions. The sin, therefore, is as great in one case as the other ; and it is so great in both, that no sufficient excuses can ever be made for it in either, though several are often pleaded.

Many persons imagine that, when they have committed a fault, it is very pardonable to conceal it under a lie. But some faults ought not to be concealed at all, and none by this method—which is committing two instead of one, and the second not uncommonly worse than the first. An ingenuous confession will be likely, in most cases, to procure an easy pardon ; but a lie

is a monstrous aggravation of an offence, and persisting in a lie can very hardly be forgiven. But, above all, if any persons, to hide what they have done amiss themselves, are so vile as to throw the blame or the suspicion of it upon another, this is the height of wickedness ; and, therefore, particularly all children and servants, who are chiefly tempted to excuse themselves by telling falsehoods, ought to undergo anything rather than be guilty of such a sin. And, on the other hand, all parents, masters, and mistresses, ought to beware of punishing them too severely for their other offences, lest they drive them into a habit of this terrible one.

Some again plead for making free with truth, that they do it only in jest ; but these jests of theirs often occasion great uneasiness and disquiet, and sometimes other very serious bad consequences. The Scripture, therefore, hath passed a severe censure upon them—“ As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am I not in sport ? ” To give another person vexation, or make him appear contemptible, though in a slight instance, is by no means innocent sport. And besides, to speak falsehood on any occasion is a dangerous introduction to speaking it on more, if not all, occasions : for if so trifling a motive as a jest will prevail on us to violate truth, how can we be expected to withstand more weighty temptations ?

However, it may perhaps at least be thought, that lying, to prevent mischief and do good, must be permitted. But the Scripture expressly forbids us to “ do evil that good may come.” And they who allow themselves in it will usually be discovered, and lose their end ; or, if not, will never know where to stop. They will be enticed by degrees to think everything good that serves their turn, let others think it ever so bad ; those others again will think themselves authorized by such examples to take the same liberties : and thus all trust and probity will be lost amongst men—a much greater evil than any good which falsehood may do now and then will ever compensate.

And if telling lies, even from these plausible inducements, be so bad, what must it be when they proceed from less excusable ones, as desire of promoting our own interest, or that of our party ? And how completely detestable when we are prompted to them by malice, or undue resentment, or any other totally wicked principle !

Nor is the practice less imprudent than it is unlawful. Some indeed lie to raise their characters, as others do to gain their points ; but both act very absurdly, for they miss of their purpose entirely as soon as they are found out ; and all liars are found out

—immediately for the most part, but in a while without fail. And after that everybody despises and hates them : even when they speak truth, nobody knows how to credit them ; and so, by aiming wickedly at some little advantage for the present, they put themselves foolishly under the greatest disadvantage in the world ever after. “The lip of truth shall be established for ever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.” Beware, then, of the least beginning of a practice that will be sure to end ill. For if you venture upon falsehood at all, it will grow upon you and entangle you, and bring you to shame, to punishment, to ruin. And besides what you will suffer by it here, your portion, unless you repent very deeply, and amend very thoroughly, will be with the father of lies hereafter ; for into the heavenly “Jerusalem shall in no wise enter whosoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.” “Lying lips are abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are his delight.”

There is yet another sort of falsehood, often full as bad as affirming what we do not think—I mean, promising what we do not intend, or what we neglect afterwards to perform so soon or so fully as we ought. Whoever hath promised hath made himself a debtor ; and unless he be punctual in his payment, commits an injustice, which, in many cases, may be of very pernicious consequence.

Now in order to secure this great point of speaking truth, besides considering carefully and frequently the before-mentioned evils of departing from it, we should be attentive also to moderate the quantity of our discourse, lest we fall into falsehood unawares ; for “in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin ; but he that refraineth his lips is wise.” Persons who suffer themselves to run on heedlessly in talk, just as their present humour disposes them, or the present company will be best pleased, or who will say almost anything rather than say nothing, must be perpetually transgressing some of the duties comprehended under this commandment, which yet it is of the utmost importance not to transgress. For, with respect to the concerns of this world, “he that loveth life, and would see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips, that they speak no guile.” And as to our eternal state in the next, “if any man seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man’s religion is vain.”

CHRISTIAN COURTESY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. RICHARD HURD, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF WORCESTER.

ROM. XII. 10.

In honour preferring one another.

IT is much to the honour of the inspired writers, because it shows them to be no enthusiasts, that, with all their zeal for the revealed doctrines of the Gospel, they never forget or overlook the common duties of humanity—those duties which reason itself, a prior revelation, had made known to the wiser part of mankind.

Nay, what is more remarkable, they sometimes condescend to enforce what are called the “lesser moralities;” that is, those inferior duties, which, not being of absolute necessity to the support of human society, are frequently overlooked by other moralists, and yet, as contributing very much to the comfortable enjoyment of it, are of real moment, and deserve a suitable regard.

The text is an instance of this sort—“in honour preferring one another”—the nature, and ground, and right application of which duty it is my present purpose to explain.

1. The general *nature* of this virtue consists in a disposition to express our good-will to others by exterior testimonies of respect—to consult the credit and honour of those we converse with, though at some expense of our own vanity and self-love. It implies a readiness to prevent them in the customary decencies of conversation; a facility to give way to their reasonable pretensions, and even to abate something of our own just rights. It requires us to suppress our petulant claims of superiority; to decline all frivolous contests and petty rivalries; to moderate our own demands of pre-eminence and priority; and, in a word, to please others rather than ourselves.

It is an easy, social, conciliating virtue—a virtue made up of humility and benevolence; the former inclining us not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought; and the latter to give our Christian brother an innocent satisfaction when we can.

And our obligation to the practice of this virtue is *founded*—

2. On the clearest reasons, taken both from the nature of man and the genius of our holy religion.

And, first, from the nature of man.

Among the various principles—some of them, in appearance, discordant and contradictory—which constitute our common nature, one of the first to take our attention is “a conscious sense of dignity;” an opinion of self-consequence, which mixes itself with all our thoughts and deliberations, prompting us to entertain lofty sentiments of our own worth, and aspiring to something like superiority and dominion over other men. This principle, which appears very early, and is strongest in the more generous dispositions, is highly necessary to a being formed for virtuous action, and naturally leads to the exertion of such qualities as are proper to benefit society, as well as to gain that ascendancy in it to which we pretend. It is the spring, indeed, of every commendable emulation; puts in act all our better and nobler faculties; and gives nerves to that labour and industry by which every worthy accomplishment is attained.

But now this principle (so natural and useful), when it is not checked by others, but is suffered to take the lead and predominate on all occasions, undisciplined and uncontrolled, easily grows into a very offensive and hurtful quality—offensive, because it is now exerted to the humiliation of every other, who is actuated by the same principle; and hurtful, because, in this undue degree, it counteracts the very purpose, the good of human society, for which it was designed.

This quality we know by the name of *pride*. The other moderate degree of self-esteem, which is allowable and virtuous, seems not (I suppose, from its rare appearance under that form) to have acquired in our language a distinct name.

To pride, then, the pernicious and too common issue of self-love, it became necessary that some other principle should be opposed. And such a principle, as is proper to correct the malignity of pride, we find in that philanthropy which, by an instinct of the same common nature, disposeth us to consult the happiness, and to conciliate to ourselves the good-will and affection, of mankind. This benevolent movement of the mind is, further, quickened by the mutual interest all men have in the exercise of it. For pride is disarmed by submission; and, by receding from our own pretensions, we take the most likely way to moderate those of other men. Thus the generous affections are kept in play, reciprocal civilities are maintained, and, by the habit of each preferring other, which prudence would advise, if instinct did not inspire, the peace of society is preserved, its joy

increased, and even our vanity, so far as it is a just and natural affection, gratified and indulged.

The reason of the apostolic precept is, then, laid deep in the constitution of human nature; which is so wonderfully formed, that its perfection requires the reconciliation of contrary qualities, and its happiness results from making benevolence itself subservient to self-love.

2. If, from the philosophic consideration of man, we turn to the “genius of the Gospel,” we shall there find this conclusion of natural reason strengthened and confirmed by evangelical motives.

Benevolence, which, in the Gospel, takes the name of Charity, hath a larger range in this new dispensation than in that of nature. The doctrine, and still more the example, of Jesus, extends the duty of humility and self-denial, requires us to make ampler sacrifices of self-love, and to give higher demonstrations of good-will to others, than mere reason could well demand or enforce. He that was so far from “seeking his own,” that he “emptied himself of all his glory,” and stooped from heaven to earth for the sake of man, hath a right to expect from his followers a more than ordinary effort to conform to so divine a precedent, a peculiar attention to the mutual benefits and concerns of each other. It is but little that we keep within some decent bounds our aspiring tempers and inclinations; we are now to subject ourselves to our Christian brethren; to renounce even our innocent and lawful pretensions; and to forego every natural gratification, when the purposes of Christian charity call us to this arduous task.

For the Gospel, it is to be observed, has taken us out of the loose and general relation of men, and has bound us together in the closer and more endearing tie of brethren. It exalts the good-will we were obliged to bear to the species into the affection which consanguinity inspires for the individuals of a private family. The apostle, therefore, in the words preceding the text, bids us “be kindly-affectioned one to another with *brotherly love*”—not with the love that unites one man with another, which is the highest pretension of mere morality, but with the love that knits together natural brethren, which is the proper boast and character of evangelical love. The words of the original have a peculiar energy: they express that instinctive warmth of affection which nature puts into our hearts for our nearest kindred, such as communicate with us by the participation of one common blood.

So that the same compliances we should make with their inclinations, the same preference we should give to their humour

and interest above our own, should now be extended and exercised towards all Christians; and that principle of an ardent affection, by which we are led to make the most cheerful condescensions to our natural brother, should work in us the same generous consideration of our spiritual brother, “for whom Christ died.”

Having explained the *nature* of this duty, and the *grounds*, both in reason and religion, on which it rests, it now remains—

3. To provide for the *right application* of it in practice. And here, in truth, the whole difficulty lies.

It is evident enough, I suppose, from what has been said, that the moral and Christian duty of “preferring one another in honour” respects only social peace and charity, and terminates in the good and edification of our Christian brother. Its use is to soften the minds of men, and to draw them from that savage rusticity, which engenders many vices and discredits the virtues themselves. But when men had experienced the benefit of this complying temper, and further saw the ends, not of charity only, but of self-interest, that might be answered by it, they considered no longer its just purpose and application, but stretched it to that officious sedulity, and extreme servility of adulation, which we too often observe and lament in polished life.

Hence that infinite attention and consideration which is so rigidly exacted, and so duly paid, in the commerce of the world; hence that prostitution of mind, which leaves a man no will, no sentiment, no principle, no character, all which disappear under the uniform exhibition of good manners; hence those insidious arts, those studied disguises, those obsequious flatteries, nay, those affected freedoms—in a word, those multiplied and nicely-varied forms of insinuation and address, the direct aim of which may be to acquire the fame of politeness and good-breeding, but the certain effect, to corrupt every virtue, to soothe every vanity, and to inflame every vice, of the human heart.

These fatal mischiefs introduce themselves under the pretence and semblance of that humanity which the text encourages and enjoins. But the genuine virtue is easily distinguished from the counterfeit, and by the following plain signs.

1. True politeness is modest, unpretending, and generous. It appears as little as may be; and when it does a courtesy, would willingly conceal it. It chooses silently to forego its own claims, not officiously to withdraw them. It engages a man to prefer his neighbour to himself; because he really esteems him; because he is tender of his reputation; because he thinks it more manly, more Christian, to descend a little himself, than to degrade another. It respects, in a word, the credit and estimation of his neighbour.

The mimic of this amiable virtue, false politeness, is, on the other hand, ambitious, servile, timorous. It affects popularity; is solicitous to please, and to be taken notice of. The man of this character does not offer, but obtrude, his civilities; because he would merit by this assiduity; because, in despair of winning regard by any worthier qualities, he would be sure to make the most of this; and lastly, because, of all things, he would dread, by the omission of any punctilious observance, to give offence. In a word, this sort of politeness respects, for its immediate object, the favour and consideration of our neighbour.

2. Again: the man who governs himself by the spirit of the apostle's precept, expresses his preference of another in such a way as is worthy of himself—in all innocent compliances, in all honest civilities, in all decent and manly condescensions.

On the contrary, the man of the world, who rests in the letter of this command, is regardless of the means by which he conducts himself. He respects neither his own dignity nor that of human nature. Truth, reason, virtue—all are equally betrayed by this supple impostor. He assents to the errors, though the most pernicious; he applauds the follies, though the most ridiculous; he soothes the vices, though the most flagitious, of other men. He never contradicts, though in the softest form of insinuation; he never disapproves, though by a respectful silence; he never condemns, though it be only by a good example. In short, he is solicitous for nothing, but by some studied devices to hide from others, and, if possible, to palliate to himself, the grossness of his illiberal adulmentation.

3. Lastly, we may be sure that the ultimate ends for which these different objects are pursued, and by so different means, must also lie wide of each other.

Accordingly, the truly polite man would, by all proper testimonies of respect, promote the credit and estimation of his neighbour; because he sees that, by this generous consideration of each other, the peace of the world is in a good degree preserved; because he knows that these mutual attentions prevent animosities, soften the fierceness of men's manners, and dispose them to all the offices of benevolence and charity; because, in a word, the interests of society are best served by this conduct; and because he understands it to be his duty “to love his neighbour.”

The falsely polite, on the contrary, are anxious, by all means whatever, to procure the favour and consideration of those they converse with; because they regard ultimately nothing more than their private interest; because they perceive that their own selfish designs are best carried on by such practices; in a word, because they love themselves.

Thus, we see, the genuine virtue consults the honour of others by worthy means, and for the noblest purpose ; the counterfeit solicits their favour by dishonest compliances, and for the basest end.

By such evident marks are these two characters distinguished from each other ; and so impossible it is, without a wilful perversion of our faculties, to mistake in the application of the apostle's precept.

It follows, you see, from what has been said, that integrity of heart, as Solomon long since observed, is the best guide in morals. We may impose upon others by a show of civility, but the deception goes no farther. We cannot help knowing, in our own case, if we be ingenuous, when this virtue retains its nature, and when it degenerates into the vice that usurps its name. To conclude, an honest man runs no risk in being polite. Let us only respect ourselves, and we shall rarely do amiss, when, as the apostle advises, in honour we prefer one another.

THE DUTY OF MORAL RECTITUDE.

BY THE REV. JOHN KETTLEWELL, B.D.

Of the Particular Laws comprehended under the Duty of Moral Rectitude.

IN regard, our working and obeying is that whereupon all our hopes and happiness, our security and comfort hangs; it is very necessary that, after all which has been hitherto discoursed of it in the general, we go on still further and enquire of it more particularly; for if it be our obedience or disobedience that must dispense out life or death to us, and eternally save or destroy us at the last day, then whosoever would know beforehand what shall be his final sentence, must enquire what is his present state, and what have been his past actions, whether in them he have obeyed or no. And the way to understand that is, first, to know what those laws are whereto his obedience is due, and in what manner and degrees he is to obey them; and when once he hath informed himself in these, he may quickly learn from the testimony of his own heart and conscience whether he has performed that obedience, which is indispensably required to his happiness, or has fallen short of it.

And to give the best assistance that I can in so weighty a case, I will here proceed to enquire further into this obedience, and show concerning it these two things:—

I. What those laws are which the Gospel bids us to obey under the sanction of life or death; and—

II. What degrees and manner of obedience is indispensably required to them.

I. Then I will enquire what those laws are whereby at the last day we must all be judged, and which the Gospel binds us to obey under the sanction of life or death.

And that I may render this enquiry as useful as I can, I will set down as I go along the meaning and explication of those several virtues and vices which are either required or forbidden in the particular laws, that so we may more truly and readily understand whether the virtues have been performed or the vices incurred, and whether thereby the laws have been broken or kept by us.

As for the laws and commands of God, they are all reduced

by St. Paul to three heads : for either they require something from us towards God himself, and so are contained in works of piety ; or towards our neighbours, all which are comprehended in works of righteousness ; or towards our own selves, as all those precepts do which are taken up in works of sobriety. In these three general virtues is comprised the sum of our Christian duty, even all that which is required by the Gospel as the condition of salvation ; for the Gospel, saith he, or that grace of God which brings us the welcome offers of salvation, hath appeared now to all men, teaching us, as ever we expect that salvation which it tenders to us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, godly, and righteously, in this present world.

I begin with that which contains all our duty towards ourselves, viz., sobriety, or moral rectitude.

Sobriety is, in the general, such a regulation of all our actions, whether they concern our bodies or our souls, as makes it appear that they are guided by a sound mind presiding in flesh, and that the animal body which they flow from is under the command of a spiritual reason. It is a doing that which is becoming and fit for such creatures, as are soul as well as body ; or that have a wise and discerning spirit, which should govern and give laws in this lump of flesh. So that sobriety is a taking care and giving what is due and becoming to both the parts of our natures, viz., our bodies and our souls.

As for our bodies, all the things in the world which affect them are of a limited goodness or illness ; but yet in their desires and aversations of them, they do not of themselves know any limits : so that in their desires and actions that dueness and decency which sobriety prescribes is keeping within due bounds or moderation.

And this moderation is either—

1. Of their desires and use of such things as gratify and delight them, whether that inveigling delight which causes such excess of use and desire be—

(1). In meats ; and our desire and use of them, both as to their quantity and quality, is moderated by temperance.

(2). In drinks ; and the like moderation there is by sobriety, more particularly so called.

(3). In other bodily pleasures, which are particularly called lust ; and our bodily desires and use of them are moderated by chastity : and the ability to contain ourselves, and to restrain the violence of our desires herein, is called continence.

(4). In riches and honours ; and the desire and use of these are moderated by contempt of the world, and contentedness.

In our bodily desires and use of all these things, by reason of the unbridled temper of our bodily appetites, which stop at no bounds, nor ever know when they have enough, we are in great danger to exceed, and therefore our desires and use of them stand in need to be moderated and retrenched by these virtues, that it may appear we understand and act, not as brute beasts, who have nothing else but bodily appetite to guide them, but as men, who have wise souls presiding in flesh, to keep the exorbitant inclinations of our bodies within decency and due bounds; which souls, moreover, as we show by such actions, are of an immortal and invaluable nature, whose interest thereof is infinitely dearer to us, and calls incomparably more for our care and pains than our bodies either do, or in reason ought to call for.

2. Of their aversation and avoidance of such things as grieve and trouble them. Whether that matter of our bodily avoidance be—

(1). The troubles and losses that are laid in the way of our duty; and our avoidance of these is moderated by the duty of taking up the cross.

(2). The irksome pains which we take in going through it and performing it; and our avoidance of this is moderated by the virtues of diligence and watchfulness.

(3). The great evils which we have already fallen under and are suffering for it; and our avoidance and flight of these is moderated and restrained by patience.

Our hatred and avoidance of all these evils, which in themselves are naturally prone to be excessive, are so to be moderated and overruled by these virtues, that all the world may see how we are not acted, as the brute beasts are, by mere sense and appetite, which know no rules of decency, nor stop at any limits; but know and do as becomes men who are endowed with spiritual and discerning souls, which understand how to give laws and prescribe rules of decency to our fleshly appetites, and whose sins are far worse evils than any or all the sufferings which can befall our bodies; so that to keep back from them, we will not avoid and fly from those, but willingly embrace and undergo them.

And to enable us the better thus to moderate all the desires and aversations, and to keep perfectly under command and within just bounds these naturally extravagant tendencies and propensities of our flesh, we must curb and keep it in, and dead in great degrees, not only its immoderate and excessive, but also its innocent eagerness and inclinations, lest they become a snare to us, and acquire so much strength by our indulgence of them as will carry us on to gratify them at other times when

they are not innocent, but sinful, which, but for such curbing and conquest of them, they would be sure to do ; and this is done by the general virtues of mortification and self-denial.

The great matter, indeed, and principal object of mortification and self-denial is our sinful appetites, and such disobedient actions as we are tempted and drawn into by the untamed inclinations of our bodies. And this, St. Paul affirms, is an indispensable duty, and a virtue of absolute necessity unto life. “ If ye live after the flesh (saith he) you shall die ; but if you, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.”

But as our sinful and disobedient appetites are the prime object of all religious self-denial and mortification, and that which is absolutely necessary, as the end, so likewise are our innocent appetites an inferior object of it, and our mortifications of them is a necessary means and instrument, without which we shall never be able to mortify the other. For a free allowance of our bodily desires in all things lawful, and an unlimited gratification of them in all instances whatsoever where they are innocent, would certainly prove a snare to us, and betray us into a like indulgence and satisfaction of them in some cases where they are sinful and disobedient.

And the reason of this is plain ; because if we should gratify them in all things where we may lawfully, and never deny them anything but what is sinful, they must needs come, by long use and indulgence, to rule in us, and to have a great power and empire over us. By indulgence and custom they will grow strong, and we shall find it a matter of great difficulty to put them by, and a very painful task to deny them anything, so that whithersoever they lead us it is odds but we shall follow them. But now as for their parts, they make no difference between an innocent and a sinful enjoyment ; they do not distinguish things into good and evil ; they are not moved by law and decency, but by pleasure, and desire what is delightsome and agrees with them, whether it happen to be allowed to them or forbidden. So that, let them but once be strong and come to rule in us, and they will overrule us in instances which are prohibited as well as in those which are allowed, and make us fulfil them in things sinful as well as in things innocent. And therefore we must learn to mortify and deny our bodily appetites in all instances, that they may be weak and governable in all instances, and that we may have the rule of them in all, and they not have the rule of us in any.

And this mortification and denial of our lawful and innocent bodily appetites being thus plainly necessary to the denial and mortification of our sinful and unlawful bodily desires and actions,

our Lord Jesus Christ, who best understood the necessities of our nature, what instruments were most necessary and what means most proportionate for us, has enacted it into a law. So that now it is every man's duty to mortify and deny, not only all sinful bodily actions and desires, but, so far as is necessary unto that, all such as are innocent and lawful also. And according to the different degrees of men's progress herein, are their different perfections in virtue, and their different measures of security and assurance that they shall continue in it: it being only the unmortifiedness of their fleshly desires which can prove a snare to them, and a dangerous temptation; "Every man (as St. James says) being tempted then, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed."

And all the fore-named virtues, viz., temperance, sobriety, chastity, &c., are duties incumbent upon us, and implied in that care which this general virtue, sobriety, takes of our meaner part, our bodies.

And then, as for what more directly concerns our souls, that dueness and decency which sobriety prescribes in their actions and towards them, is either—

1. In thinking no better of ourselves than we deserve, but having a just sense of all our weaknesses and defects; which is humility and lowliness of mind.

2. In taking all that just care and thoughtfulness after their future good and happiness which their worth requires; which is heavenly-mindedness, or contriving and designing for the things of heaven.

And as he has commanded us to exercise all these virtues towards our own selves, whether in relation to our souls or bodies, so has he as strictly forbid us to act those vices which are contrary to them; as are these that follow—

First. To humility or lowliness of mind is opposed—

1. An over-high conceit of our own excellence and pre-eminence above others, making us set ourselves and strive to appear above them, and contemn and despise them as persons that are below us; which is pride.

2. An outward expression of this, in making a false show of more excellence than indeed we have, whether in religious, natural, or civil endowments; which implies hypocrisy joined with pride, and is called arrogance, ostentation, boasting.

3. An industrious affecting in all things by setting out our own praise, and exposing our achievements, to get the honour and praise of others answerable to the conceit which we have of our own selves; which is vain-glory.

4. A restless pursuit of honour and great places, which we conceit ourselves to be worthy of; which is ambition.

And the effects of this pride and elation of mind are—

(1). In our behaviour, a scornful and contemptuous disrespect and sleight of others; which is haughtiness. And if it go on to an unusual and enormous degree, it is insolence. And this haughtiness, when it is expressed in a commanding way, as if we had lordship and authority over them, is imperiousness; which, when it is shown in exacting their submission to our dogmas or opinions, is dogmaticalness, or impatience of contradiction.

(2). In our speeches of others, an envious depression and disparagement of them, the better to set off our own selves; which is backbiting.

(3). In our conversation, a mixture of pride and envy, or an envious provoking strife of outdoing others, and being better thought of ourselves, or of hindering their designs, lest they should enjoy what we, who in our own opinion deserve it better, are deprived of; which is emulation.

Secondly. To heavenly-mindedness is opposed an over-industrious care of present things, or being wholly or chiefly taken up with this world; which is worldliness.

Thirdly. To moderation is opposed luxury or excess. And as that moderation which sobriety prescribed was either in meats or drinks, &c., so is the breach of sobriety in excess likewise. For—

1. To temperance is opposed intemperance, which, when it is a luxury—

(1). In the quantity of meat, is called gluttony.

(2). In the deliciousness or quality of it, is called voluptuousness.

2. To sobriety, or a moderate and undisturbing use of drink, is opposed a stupifying and intoxicating use of it; which is drunkenness. And this, when it is accompanied with boisterousness, unchaste songs, and riotous mirth, is called revelling.

3. To chastity is opposed unchasteness, and that weakness which betrays us into it, viz., our subjection to our bodily lusts, and inability to contain them within due bounds, is called incontinence.

4. To contempt of the world and contentment with our present condition is opposed covetousness, which is an immoderate love of the world, or an unsatisfiedness with what we have, and an insatiable desire of more, and grudging or repining.

5. To taking up the cross is opposed our being scandalized or turned out of the way of duty and obedience by reason of it, or a politic and selfish deserting of our duty to avoid the cross.

6. To diligence and watchfulness in doing of our duty is opposed a heedlessness of it and remiss application to it; which is carelessness and idleness.

7. To patience in suffering for it is opposed an immoderate dread of pain and dishonest avoidance of it; which is softness and fearfulness.

8. To mortification and self-denial is opposed self-love and self-pleasing; which, as it is an industrious care to please and gratify our bodily senses, is called sensuality; and as it is a ready and constant serving and obeying the lusts and desires of the flesh, especially when they carry us against the commands of God, is called carnality.

These are those vices and breaches of duty towards ourselves which God's laws have prohibited under the pains of death and hell, as the other were such virtues as under the same penalty he exacts of us.

COVETOUSNESS.

BY THE REV. JOHN JORTIN, D.D., ARCHDEACON OF LONDON.

EXODUS XX. 17.

Thou shalt not covet anything that is thy neighbour's.

THE tenth and last commandment may be considered—

I. First, as forbidding a crime of an extensive and complicated nature—the crime of coveting.

II. Secondly, as having a respect, more or less, to all the foregoing commandments of the second table—as securing and enforcing a due regard to them, and condemning that temper and those actions which lead to the violation of them.

I. First, the crime here forbidden is coveting the property of another person ; and of this coveting, or concupiscence, there are three degrees—first, a simple desire—secondly, a violent passion—and thirdly, an evil disposition breaking out into evil designs and attempts, which, though unsuccessful, yet are criminal.

The beginning of coveting is a simple desire. When a man considers and contemplates an object that is useful, pleasant, convenient, and alluring—an object of which he is deprived, and which another person possesseth, a wish will perhaps arise that he were the possessor, and he will say to himself, “It would be better for me if I had such things, and my neighbour, who hath them, is in a much happier condition than I am.”

This simple wish, unpremeditated, and almost involuntary, and carried no further, may perhaps deserve rather to fall under the name of a weakness than of a crime ; and yet there is something mean, and silly, and irregular in it, and reason and religion teach us that we ought to restrain and check it in its rise. The better and the wiser a man is, the less he will be troubled with frivolous desires of this kind. Equanimity, contentment, reliance upon God, and resignation to his providence, are virtues which directly tend to subdue and suppress such impudent thoughts. Such thoughts, though they may not imply any confirmed depravity, show that the mind is not in a due situation—even as a sluggish heaviness, a degree of heat more than usual,

and an unequal pulse, though it be not a fever, yet is not a proper disposition of body and a state of health.

But, secondly, such wishes, like bad seed sowed in the mind, are apt to take root, and to bring forth evil fruits. When they have been long indulged and frequently repeated, they produce a fretful uneasiness, and are transformed into a restless passion and a continual discontent; and then the mind is off of its guard, and delivered up to irregular dispositions. The man is dissatisfied with his condition; the blessings and conveniences which he enjoys he slighteth and overlooks with base ingratitude; the things which he cannot obtain he overrates and admires too much; the persons who possess what he wants are the objects of his envy, and in some degree of his aversion.

Such a temper is very remote from a sober regard to the precepts of reason, to the will of God, and to the social duties; for whosoever will be a good man, and a good citizen, should keep not only his hands, but his eyes and his heart, from the possessions and the property of others.

From this distempered state of mind an easy step is made to unwarrantable actions, to the laying base projects and evil schemes with a view to defraud and injure others, and to obtain the things which are coveted, as far as it can be done with impunity, and without falling under the correction of human laws. And this is properly the crime which stands condemned in this tenth commandment—a commandment which, as we shall show, secondly, hath a respect, more or less, to all the foregoing commandments of the second table, securing and enforcing the obedience which is due to them, and condemning those dispositions and actions which directly lead to the violation of them.

II. The fifth commandment says, “ Honour thy father and thy mother”—a precept upon the due observance of which the happiness of individuals and the prosperity of civil society in no small measure depend, and which God hath honoured with singular promises of approbation and recompense. Now, not to covet the things of another, is a law which bears some relation to this commandment, and affords assistance to the practice of it; for the ungrateful and undutiful behaviour of young persons to parents often arises from coveting their possessions, and not being contented with that part of it which they receive. Hence ariseth an impatience and a disrespect on the one side, and a grief and resentment on the other, and the amiable and powerful bonds of natural affection are weakened, and perhaps quite broken.

The sixth commandment forbids murder; and if you consider by what evil dispositions and by what motives men are led to this

last act of villany, you will find them usually reducible to these two—either to ungoverned anger and malicious resentment, or to the love of unlawful gain and the desire of unlawful acquisitions. So that he who is contented with his own, and covets nothing to which he hath no right, is secure from one of the pressing temptations which drive needy and profligate persons into this heinous crime.

The seventh commandment is of the utmost consequence to the peace of families and to the welfare of society, and forbids an iniquity most odious in the sight of God—an offence which all human laws condemn, but which they do not always punish as strictly as it deserves—“Thou shalt not commit adultery.” By the law of Moses, death was the punishment of adultery; and restitution, with a fine, was the punishment of theft. But in Christian nations, I know not how and wherefore, this rule is inverted, and it is safer to commit adultery than to steal, though surely it ought not to be so.

To guard and strengthen this important law, the tenth commandment says, “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife”—by which men are forbidden to give encouragement to a criminal passion, or to use any methods tending to satisfy it, though the endeavours should prove ineffectual. Such were an attempt to alienate the affections of husband and wife from each other, for as, among the Jews, divorces were frequent, artifices of this kind might be frequently put in practice by wicked persons. All such evil deeds were forbidden by the law, “Thou shalt not covet;” which therefore lays a greater restraint upon men than the foregoing commandment against adultery, and requires an innocence of heart and thought, securing men from all approaches and all attempts to do this irreparable injury to their neighbour. And indeed the law itself against adultery should be considered as forbidding indirectly, and by way of consequence, fornication and all impurity, as immoral in itself, and directly leading to the practice of adultery—even as the commandment against murder may be justly supposed to forbid all cruel usage of another, which may be as effectual to shorten his days and deprive him of his life as murder itself.

The eighth commandment says, “Thou shalt not steal.” When a man by right of inheritance, or by his own industry, by fair and honest means, hath gotten a maintenance, it is highly fit that he should enjoy it, and that none should deprive him of his possessions. Let* theft and robbery be generally practised

* The Lacedæmonians permitted theft, and the art of thieving; but their form of government was, in many respects, not only singular—it was absurd.

in any nation, and tolerated, and permitted to enjoy connivance and impunity, there will be an end of all labour, commerce, and diligence, and such a nation will become a riotous collection of freebooters and assassins, living upon spoil and plunder.

The Egyptians, with whom the Israelites had so long dwelt, were great cheats, thieves, and pilferers, as their neighbours the Ishmaelites or Arabians were robbers and plunderers, and are so to this day. The Israelites had, in all probability, learned the vices of the Egyptians, and therefore it was the more necessary that theft should have a place amongst the more heinous crimes condemned in the ten commandments. The Egyptian government made laws against theft—laws not the most rigorous and severe, calculated rather to curb and restrain it than to extirpate it, for the nation was so addicted to this vice, that if they had destroyed all the guilty, the country must have been depopulated. The law of Moses also, as we observed, doth not punish it as rigorously as several other transgressions.

To confirm and corroborate this law against theft, the tenth commandment adds, “Thou shalt not covet”—which extends itself much farther, and condemns all evil practices approaching to the nature of theft or of robbery; for there are various ways of wronging our neighbour, as cheating, defrauding, detaining, deceiving, over-reaching, extorting, and taking a mean advantage of his ignorance, his necessity, his carelessness, his good temper, his hopes or fears, to make a profit of him. These, and all oblique arts of imposing upon others, as they are not direct theft and robbery, so they usually lie out of the reach of human laws, and escape the punishment which they well deserve. But they are all condemned by that general precept, “Thou shalt not covet;” and he who observes this rule, and is free from coveting, will keep himself free from the faults above-mentioned.

The ninth commandment says, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour”—a crime of a most odious and pernicious nature. It tends to banish from society all regard to truth and all confidence which men can place in each other, to distress and mislead courts of judicature, to protect and reward the guilty, to condemn and oppress the innocent, and to establish practical atheism by profaning the name and despising the authority of God.

The law of Moses, as it here condemns this crime, so in other places it inflicts upon it a very suitable punishment, namely, retaliation. He who, by a false testimony, would deprive another of his liberty, his property, or his life, is to suffer the same evil

which he would unjustly bring upon his neighbour. This also was a law of the Egyptians and of other nations: but it is so reasonable that it may be accounted a law of nature, and the voice of humanity and of common sense.

Of bearing false testimony there are two kinds. The first is wilful, deliberate, and malicious perjury, for which hardly any punishment can be thought too severe, and where the sentence of retaliation is very just. The second is when the witness is in an error, and swears to some falsehood, thinking it to be true. This is undoubtedly a fault which may be greater or lesser, according to the circumstances. A witness, however, should be absolutely certain that the fact is true which he attests, or he should abstain from giving evidence, or he should give it as a point concerning which he is dubious, and may be mistaken.

With this commandment, the commandment against coveting has a close connection; for if you consider all the perjuries, the subornation of evidence, and false testimonies, in all times and places, you will find that the far greater number of those who commit this wickedness are hired, bribed, or enticed by lucre, and do it because they covet the things to which they have no right, and which they would purchase at any rate. He, therefore, who religiously observes the law against coveting, will be secure from the most dangerous and prevalent temptation to wrong his neighbour by false testimony.

But the commandment against bearing false witness is very extensive, and not only comprehends all lying testimonies given upon oath, but all false accusations, all calumny, and defamation, and detraction, open or secret.

Thus much may suffice to explain the last commandment, and to show its connection with those of the second table.

I shall now conclude with a review of the commandments, and with some farther remarks upon them in general.

The ten commandments cannot be said to be a complete body of religion and system of morality, nor even to contain the substance of the Mosaic law.

They may rather be accounted a rough draught, and the outlines of man's duty; and they were principally intended to condemn those more heinous transgressions, which, if tolerated, would destroy all religion and subvert civil society. Take these commandments according to the letter and strict meaning of the words, and you will not easily find in them the duties of piety, resignation, prayer, and thanksgiving; those of patience, charity, and humanity towards men; those of sobriety and modesty, the regulation of the passions, and the improvement of

the heart and mind. Some of these precepts are peculiar to the Jews; as the law of the Sabbath, together with the promise of happiness in the land of Canaan; and they concern not other people, except indirectly, and by way of inference.

But as our Saviour, having occasion to mention some of these laws, hath improved and enlarged them, and given them a more sublime and a more extensive meaning, we may consider the ten commandments as so many general heads, under which several particular duties may be ranged, and to which they may fairly be applied. Let us, then, take a review of them in this manner.

The first commandment in the Mosaic law enjoins the worship of one God; to which the Gospel adds, that, as there is one God and Father of all, so there is one Lord and Mediator, and one sanctifying Spirit—one Church of Christ, one faith, one rule, and one hope of Christians. Hence we are reminded of that unity which ought to be preserved amongst believers; an unity, not of opinion in doubtful, obscure, and controverted points, for that is impossible; but such an unity as love, and charity, and forbearance, and condescension, and meekness, and quietness will produce in virtuous minds.

The second commandment forbids idolatry, and, by consequence, everything that borders upon it, and which tends to withdraw us from our trust in God and in Christ. Such is not only the worship of false gods, but of angels, images, saints, and relics; and to this precept is justly to be added every inordinate and blind affection towards visible objects, and things temporal and transitory. The voluptuous, the ambitious, the covetous man is, in a figurative and yet in a true sense, a mere idolator. Wealth, power, and pleasure are the false gods, which have been and are more adored, more devoutly served and worshipped, than any idols or images whatsoever, and have extended their dominion over the face of the earth. Whosoever gives up his heart to them, and placeth his trust in them, is, in the sight of God, an apostate and practical unbeliever, notwithstanding all his professions to the contrary.

From the first and the second commandments we may collect that God is an all-perfect and spiritual being, and, as our Saviour adds, is therefore to be worshipped in spirit and in truth; and thence may be deduced that part of our duty to God which is properly called piety—as faith, hope, gratitude, love, reliance, resignation, prayer and thanksgiving, a conformity to his will, and an endeavour to imitate his perfections.

The third commandment forbids to take the name of God in vain; by which not only perjury is condemned, but swearing

upon trivial occasions, and all loose and profane conversation. A serious reverence for God, for his holy name, and for things sacred and religious, is the indispensable duty of every man, upon the principles of natural religion, and much more under the Christian covenant.

The fourth commandment, which requires the observation of the Sabbath, if interpreted according to the letter, is a law peculiar to the Jewish nation ; but, by the fairest inference, Christians may collect from it that man ought not to spend, or rather to misspend, all his time on his worldly concerns, but set apart some portion of it for religious exercises and the improvement of his heart ; that, in compliance with the most ancient practice of the Christian Church, in obedience to the laws of his country, and even for the sake of good example, he ought to show a decent respect to the Lord's day, and attend the public worship of God.

This commandment also, interpreted in a moral and sublimer sense, reminds us that good men always expected a better state than this world can afford to its inhabitants ; that the Sabbath rest required of the people of Israel, and the rest which was promised to the obedient in the land of Canaan, were figures and representations of an eternal rest in heaven from the troubles and labours of this life. The foresight and expectation of this future rest is the only solid comfort in affliction—the only sure foundation for resignation and contentment here below.

The fifth commandment, which requires that parents be honoured and obeyed by their children, may be extended, by parity of reason, to all those, who, as they act the part of parents towards other persons, so they deserve to receive the affection, gratitude, love, respect, obedience, and assistance, and all kind offices due to parents. Hence it hath come to pass, that one of the most ancient titles of reverence paid to kings, to magistrates, to priests, to prophets, to teachers, to masters, to benefactors, and to elders, was to be called fathers. Flattery, and slavery, and modern courtesy, and absurd politeness have introduced other titles, more pompous, perhaps, but less amiable and less significant : for to call a man lord, is to express a fear of him ; but to call him father, is to express a love for him, and no more fear than is consistent with love. And certainly, since God himself hath accepted this name, and hath directed us to call him our Father, we cannot, as far as words will go, honour any man more than to give him the same title. Even the greatest monarchs have affected to be called fathers of their country, though, perhaps, they have not often deserved the compliment,

but have rather been such fathers as the heathen god Saturn, or as some savages who eat or sell their own children. However, it was not amiss to give this title to every prince who desired it, since it might serve to remind him, if not of what he was, yet of what he ought to have been.

Our Saviour calls his disciples his children, and the apostles in their epistles represent themselves as spiritual fathers, and the Christians, whom they had converted and instructed, as their children. Such was the light in which they desired to appear, and such the station in which they chose to act, and such the authority which they claimed and exercised; not temporal authority, government, and dominion, but the gentlest of all powers, exercised with affectionate tenderness. They would not accept even the submission and the obedience of Christians, unless it were accompanied with love, and proceeding from a willing mind.

The sixth commandment is against murder. The Gospel hath secured and guarded this law, by forbidding all wrath and malice, hatred and revenge—all abusive and reviling language, as so many incentives to violence and to bloodshed.

The next commandment is against adultery, and hath been extended by the precepts of Christianity, so as to forbid all impurities, and to discourage and dissuade polygamy, and divorce also, except in the case of adultery, or of crimes equally heinous and insupportable.

The eighth commandment forbids theft and robbery. To this law may be referred all those precepts which require of us to do no injury to our neighbour, nor to deprive him of his fortune, his reputation, his health, his happiness, and his peace of mind; but, on the contrary, to do him all the services that lie in our power, and that he can equitably expect and desire from us.

The ninth commandment, against bearing false witness, may justly be supposed to require an abhorrence of lying, deceiving, and slandering, and an inviolable regard to truth, sincerity, impartiality, fidelity, justice, and equity.

The last commandment, which forbids us to covet the things of our neighbour, hath been the subject of this discourse, and no more needs to be added concerning it.

These ten commandments are to be divided into two parts—into those of the first, and those of the second, table—into our duty to God, and our duty to man. The first is comprised in this one law, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;” the second is reducible to this, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” And whosoever duly observes these

two great commandments cannot easily be deficient in performing his duty to himself.

The first of these commandments, or the love of God, is the law of piety; the second, or the love of man, is the law of charity. He, therefore, who, in any point, deliberately and habitually offends against his duty to God, breaks the whole law of piety; and he who, in the same manner, offends in any instance against his neighbour, breaks the whole law of charity. And in this sense St. James may be understood; when speaking of the duty of man to man, he says, “whosoever breaks one of these commandments, though he should observe the rest, violates the whole law,” namely, the law of benevolence and charity.

This love of God and of our neighbour is neither an impetuous and blind passion, nor a mere speculation; but a good disposition, produced and cultivated by reason, strengthened by faith, and verified by our actions. To love God, is to keep his commandments; and to love men, is to do them all the service and all the good that we can. Let us entreat the Giver of every good gift, that “he would have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep these laws.”

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. ZACHARY PEARCE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

GENESIS ii. 3.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

THESE words are the conclusion of Moses's history of the creation, written for the instruction of his countrymen the Jews; and it is observable, that in some of the following chapters he gives a very short account of what passed in the world before the flood, and for some small time after it. The thirst for historical knowledge was not so strong in Moses's days as it is in ours; and, perhaps, the little good use that is made of it at present, for correcting what is amiss by the lessons which former ages read to us, is what justifies the incurious temper of those ancients rather than the unavailing curiosity of us moderns. But as the historian Moses wrote for his countrymen the Jews, he had his principal end always in view, which was to train them up to true religion, and form them into a government, upon the plan of those laws which he had given them by the divine direction. He, therefore, singled out chiefly such circumstances of history as might be of use to them for these purposes. He showed them how God punished the disobedience of our first parents for breaking even one positive law—one of such a nature as a great part of those were of which he had given them for the trial of their obedience to God. He showed them, in that part of his history which described the deluge, that God might be provoked by the sins of mankind, not only to punish one man and one woman, but all the nations of the earth, when they had universally corrupted their ways; from whence the Jewish people might learn that they, as a nation, if a sinful nation, were not to hope for impunity, since the whole world had been made a just sacrifice to divine vengeance.

Besides, he had given to the Jews a law about the observation of the Sabbath, not without some circumstances attending

it which seemed, perhaps, full of great strictness and severity. He did well, therefore, notwithstanding his history takes so little notice of the religion prevailing before the flood, to mention with any especial regard the law which God gave to mankind at the very beginning, about their keeping the seventh day as a day blessed and sanctified. The law is that which I have read to you in my text, and which I propose to make the subject of my ensuing discourse.

Because the observance of every seventh day for a holy one is so much neglected by many among us; and because some, who are not wholly negligent of this part of their duty, do yet seem not to be sufficiently informed upon what foundation it stands, whether upon the laws of their country only, or merely upon the practice of the Christian Church; or whether it be, as it certainly is, of a higher original—of divine appointment: for the benefit of such as these I shall endeavour to lay before you the foundation upon which the Sabbath in general is built, and the Christian Sabbath in particular. For this purpose be it first considered, that the setting apart some portion of our time for praising God on account of his excellent greatness and goodness; for contemplating him in his works, and, as far as we can, in his nature; for considering the relation in which we stand to him as creatures, and what we owe to him on that account: be it considered, I say, that this is a moral duty, is one of a fixed and unalterable nature. Reason would have taught men this lesson, if revelation had directed nothing in the case; because it is only to pay the homage that is due to our Creator—it is only to make an acknowledgment of his right of dominion over us. But, secondly—

How much of our time ought to be set apart for this purpose, is what reason did not point out to us; in this respect it, was left at its liberty, at more liberty than it was likely most men would make a right use of; and, therefore, we find God, as mentioned in my text, blessing the seventh day, and sanctifying it, because that on the seventh day he had rested from all his work of creation—that is, he then commanded that men should sanctify, and devote as sacred, one seventh part of their time, a seventh day after six spent in labour, because his work of creation being finished in six days, as Moses represents it in compliance to our human notions, he then rested from all his work, or, to speak more suitably to the divine power, he then ceased to create, his whole design being fully accomplished. This command, therefore, seems, in the first and most obvious meaning of it, to be an appointment of the portion of our time which we are to consecrate for this purpose. We may reasonably

suppose that some particular day likewise was early named and set out for the Sabbath; but if this day was changed afterwards by God's direction, or with his approbation, as I shall show to be probable in the sequel of this discourse, then it seems plain that the signifying of the particular day was not an essential circumstance of the original law about the Sabbath, and therefore that the law was not dispensed with, or set aside by any change made afterwards from one day to another day of the week.

However, on a view of this command in my text, two things appear very plain and obvious; the one, that this is the very first law which God gave to mankind, and, therefore, in right of eldership, it may be supposed to have a double portion of blessings entailed upon it; the other, that this law was given to Adam and Eve in memory of the creation, and therefore was given to their descendants likewise, and is of universal obligation upon mankind.

Against this nothing can be objected, unless, what has been supposed by some, that the law of the Sabbath was designed for the Jews only; and that Moses, writing for their information, to whom he had given a particular law about it, placed this command here immediately after the history of the creation by way of prolepsis, or of anticipating, that is, of ante-dating the command, that it might stand in a more distinguished and conspicuous place. But this supposition has no regard to the credit of the sacred historian, for the order of facts is a part of their truth; they must be true in place as well as in nature. And it seems confuted by some footsteps, which we find of the counting time by seven days, long before the Jews were a nation. Thus Noah, when the flood was abating, is said to have stayed seven days, and then to have sent forth a dove out of the ark; and to have stayed other seven days, and then to have sent forth another.

Thus the marriages and the funerals of the patriarchs after the flood are mentioned as solemnized during seven days. Now there is no account that can so probably be given for their parcelling out time, and measuring it thus by seven and seven days, as by supposing that one day in seven was then appropriated, and that naturally introduced the distinction of weeks among them.

It seems confuted, likewise, by the manner in which Moses introduces the fourth commandment: "Remember (says he) the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" where, by calling it to their remembrance, he intimates that it was known to be their duty. And accordingly we find, that soon after the Israelites were entered into the wilderness, and before God had given them the

ten commandments from Mount Sinai, Moses said unto them, not let to-morrow be, but “to-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.”

From all which it appears, that God did, immediately after his creation of man, bless and sanctify the seventh day; thereby laying command upon all mankind, in all future ages, to set apart one seventh portion of their time for the purposes of religion. And now the chief question remains to be considered, which is, what day of the seven are we Christians to observe in a religious manner? Thirdly, therefore—

And, in answer to this question, it is proper to examine briefly into the foundation upon which the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, or last day of their week, stood, and then we shall the better see the reason why this Sabbath, as far as it regards a particular day, was abolished, and the observance of the Christian one, on the first day of the week, was substituted in its room. We are not taught with any certainty, by any part of the Scriptures, on what day of the week the patriarchs, before and after the flood, kept their Sabbath; nor need we, I think, be solicitous about knowing this, since, if they kept any one day in the seven holy, they must have sufficiently answered the principal intent of the original command in my text.

It seems to be collected with probability, from the sixteenth chapter of Exodus, that the day on which the Jews were commanded by God in the wilderness to keep their Sabbath was not that day of the week on which it had been observed by them before, and probably, therefore, not that which their ancestors had observed long; for we read there (v. 1) that the whole camp of the Israelites made a day's journey, on the fifteenth day of the second month; and the Sabbath is said (v. 29, 30) to have been kept by them on the seventh day, most probably on the seventh day after the fifteenth, for six days are mentioned to have passed between v. 26 and 27; and if this was so, then it seems very probable that the fifteenth day could not have been at that time the Sabbath day of the Israelites, who would scarcely have been allowed to have been so far from resting as to have taken a long journey on their Sabbath day.

But whether the day was then changed or not, yet most certainly the observation of the Jewish Sabbath on the last day of the week, which began in the wilderness, and which was a duty of the Jews till the Gospel abolished it, rested on another ground than that Sabbath did which was instituted immediately after the creation, which was kept by the patriarchs before and after the flood, and which was obligatory on all mankind, in memory of God being the Creator; for the appointment of that particular

day, which we call Saturday, to be observed by the Jewish nation only as the day of their Sabbath was made in remembrance of their delivery out of their Egyptian bondage, which was brought about on that day of the week. And, therefore, the reason of the command for keeping the Jewish Sabbath is thus added to the fourth commandment: “Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day”—that is, the last day of the week, for their Sabbath day.

Since, therefore, it appears that the command of keeping one day in seven holy was given at first to all mankind in memory of the creation, and that the keeping the last day of the week as a Sabbath was a law binding the Jews only, on account of the deliverance wrought for them on that day, if we Christians assign the same portion of our time for religious worship, and set apart every seventh day for it, we fully answer the intent of the original command mentioned in my text, as given at the creation. But now we are to consider what authority there is for us Christians to employ the first day of the week for that purpose, and upon what grounds our particular Sabbath was constituted.

It must be allowed by all Christians that the redemption of the Israelites out of Egypt by Moses was a type and figure of our redemption by Christ out of a worse bondage—that of sin. St. Paul is a voucher for this truth, who says, “Let no man judge you in meats or in drinks, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are the shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ.” What Christ did for us is represented and typified by those Jewish ordinances, the seventh day Sabbath in particular. From whence this inference seems plain—that that day of the week on which our spiritual deliverance by Christ was effected is at least as holy to us Christians, and as deserving to be set apart by us for religious worship, as that day was to the Jews on which their temporal deliverance was accomplished.

But we have more than this to say in favour of the Christian Sabbath; for as we are told, by all the evangelists, that on the first day of the week our Redeemer rose from the dead, by which “we were begotten again to a lively hope,” and put into a state of salvation; so they all assure us, that upon the seventh day after, which was the first day of the following week, he appeared to his disciples when they were assembled together in one place, no doubt, for religious purposes; and that upon the first day of another week, which was the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost fell on the apostles then again assembled together;

from which instances we may learn what was the practice of the apostles, who must be supposed to have well known the mind of their divine Master; and we may learn too that this practice of theirs was approved of, and authorized by the appearance of Christ, and the descent of the Holy Ghost on that day thus solemnly observed by the apostles. Nor was the practice confined to them, but was extended to the other Christians of that age; for we read that “on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.” And the same apostle intimates that the custom of the Corinthians was to meet together on the first day of every week, when he directs that on that day “every one should lay by him in store as God had prospered him.”

And this is the day which St. John calls by the peculiar and distinguishing title of the *Lord's day*—a name which it has ever since retained, as the religious observation of it was continued down from the beginning through all Christian churches, and in all ages.

And now the whole matter may be summed up in a few words. To set apart some portion of our time for religious worship, is a law of nature and religion—to keep one seventh part of it holy, is an express command of God given at the creation to all mankind—to make the last day in every week a Sabbath, was a law of God binding the Jews only, because in memory of what they only received, a deliverance on that day out of their Egyptian bondage; but to keep the Christian Sabbath on the first day of the week is now our duty, because on that day our spiritual deliverance was effected by Christ, and he either expressly ordered that day to be kept holy, among the many other things which he taught his apostles “pertaining to the kingdom of God,” or at least he visibly approved the practice which they, upon good warrant of reason, had begun, by giving them on that day, when they were assembled together, a manifestation of himself and of the Holy Spirit of God.

From the foregoing account, then, we may be able to rectify some faults both in opinion and practice concerning the Christian Sabbath.

The first is of those who have objected against our reading the fourth commandment in the public service of the Church, and adding at the end of it this prayer, “Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.” And the objection is founded upon this, that the fourth commandment obliged the Jews to keep the last day in the week for their Sabbath, which we neither do nor mean to observe in the sense in which it was given to the Jews; but from what has been said it

is easy to answer, that it is one thing to keep holy one day in seven, and another to observe some one particular day of the seven. In the fourth commandment, as it stands in Exodus xx., and is from thence inserted in the communion service of our Common Prayer-book, the reason of the commandment is founded upon God's creating the world in six days, and resting on the seventh; and, therefore, the principal intent of it appears plainly to be only this, that the seventh part of our time ought to be appropriated for the immediate service of our Creator. But this same command is again given to the Jews, and then another reason is assigned for it, viz., in memory of their deliverance out of Egypt: this law, therefore, in Deuteronomy, seems to point out the very day of the week which the Jews were to observe for their Sabbath. Our Church, then, has shown its great prudence in choosing to rehearse the command out of that chapter, where the reason assigned for it extends to all mankind; and we cannot fairly be understood to mean any more by the prayer objected to, than that God would incline our hearts to consecrate to his service one seventh part of our time, as a duty which began upon the finishing of the creation, and was to bind all men in every age of the world: what particular day of the seven we are to keep holy is not intended here, but is to be sought for from the authority of our blessed Saviour and his apostles.

A second mistake is that of those who are so weak and superstitious—and some such there are to be found, as to think it their duty to join to the observation of the Christian Sabbath the observation of the Jewish one too. But the doing of this is not only the doing of what we are not commanded to do, but of what it is unlawful and forbidden us to do; for since the Jewish Sabbath was appointed in memory of that deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt, which was a type of the deliverance of us all by Christ our Redeemer, the observing the Jewish Sabbath as necessary too, is in effect declaring, that we hold our redemption by Christ to be not yet accomplished; because the type is never in force, but while the thing figured by it remains still uneffected.

The third thing which the foregoing discourse tends to rectify is the behaviour of those who, without falling into those mistakes which have been mentioned, do what is much worse—wholly neglect the observation of the Christian Sabbath, and keep it as a day neither blessed nor sanctified by God. How general, how fashionable is it grown for men in calm and sober thought, I had almost said, with a good conscience—but one may say, with a quiet one, for they seem to have no self-reproaches, no uneasy reflections upon the matter—to misspend this day, though commanded to be kept holy by the very first law

which God ever gave to mankind, and though designed to keep up the memory of the greatest act which God ever exerted of his almighty power. Strange that any man's practice, any Christian's especially, can be so opposite to his duty ! Every time that we join in the communion service of our Church, we pray that God would " incline our hearts to keep this law." But how do such men keep it ? Do they mean to keep it as they ought ? It is to be feared that they do not ; for is not the Sabbath day with them the idlest, the most useless, the most unprofitable day of the whole week ? They forbear, perhaps, to exercise their temporal callings on that day ; but what supplies the place of them ? Do not sloth and pleasure ? Do not riot and revelling too often ? Things in comparison with which the exercise of their trades is virtue—is even religion. God is never worse served than when his day is thus given up to the service of our lusts—when it bears his name, but the devil has the use and application of it.

If God had said in the Scriptures, " Six days shalt thou labour, and on the seventh thou shalt loiter and gratify thy vices," would not the men of this sort appear to be very obedient creatures, very punctual in obeying a command which would be so dishonourable to God, and so unprofitable to themselves and society ? Were we to consider men's practice only, we should think, did we not know the contrary, that their Bibles contained commands of a directly different nature from what ours do. Can two men read the same law, and equally acknowledge it for their rule, and yet show such a wide difference in their behaviour, as there is in that of him who religiously observes the Lord's day, and of him who violates the duty of it ?

Among all the strange things of which human nature is seen to be capable, there is nothing perhaps stranger, when well considered, than that any creature should so totally and habitually, as some do, break the very first law of the Creator, and that given in memory of the creation itself. Reason bids men spend the Sabbath day in the public and private exercise in religion ; but do they give any attention to this faithful monitor ? Example and custom invite them to it ; but do they follow the pattern—they who, in other cases, are ready and quick-paced enough to follow closely after any evil influence ? The laws of God and man compel and command them to sanctify the Christian Sabbath ; but do not they reject all this authority, and act as if the day was peculiarly devoted to pleasure and vice—as if it was one part of their religion, as Christians, to show no public appearance of religion at all ?

In another discourse upon this text I shall endeavour to prove

at large in what particulars the duty of this day consists, and in what manner we are bound to keep it holy. At present I shall conclude with beseeching all you who hear me this day, that if you are convinced by anything that has been now said of the obligations which you lie under to sanctify the Christian Sabbath, you would do it in sincerity, and under a full sense of the duty—that you would give God his due, the seventh part of your time, which he has appropriated to himself—He, who has a right to your whole time, if he had pleased to demand it, but who now contents himself with such a small portion of it, thereby providing as much for the eternal interest of your souls as for his own honour; and, therefore, if you neglect this day, which the Lord hath made, you in effect renounce him as your Creator, and can have small hope, in the day of recompence, to find any benefit from his Son as your Redeemer.

THE RULE OF EQUITY

BY THE RIGHT REV. JOHN CONYBEARE, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

MATT. vii. 12.

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, for this is the law and the prophets.

THERE will be none occasion, in discoursing on these words, that I should enter on any nice enquiry concerning their connexion with those which go before them. The expression, therefore, with which they are introduced, is observed to be frequently used, not only as a mark of inference, but likewise to denote the writer's passing from one subject to another. And whether we consider these words as a part of our Saviour's discourse, recorded in this and the foregoing chapters, or as a single independent rule of life, the meaning of them will be much the same. It shall be my business, therefore, at present, to explain their meaning, to confirm their truth, to represent the excellency and usefulness of the rule they propose to us, and then to enforce, from several considerations, a strict obedience to it.

The rule before us is of a very large extent, and of singular use in the whole conduct of life: it comprehends under it all the several branches both of justice and charity; and, if rightly understood, will direct us how we ought to behave towards one another in all possible circumstances. This I shall endeavour to show distinctly, as I proceed in this discourse.

At present, and before I proceed to those several particulars which the subject before us will suggest, I shall only observe, that this rule was given us by a person of infinite wisdom and of absolute authority; it is not merely the direction of a philosopher, who might deceive others or be deceived himself, but issued from Him in whom were lodged infinite treasures of wisdom; who comprehends, in one view, all the several relations in which we can stand to one another; who must discern what is, in all cases, most proper to be done, and therefore, who was —the fittest, do I say?—the only fit person to prescribe an universal rule of life.

To this infinity of wisdom let us add the perfection of his

authority. He was the Messiah, the Anointed of God; and upon that account invested with an absolute right to give us laws: *nam* (which is yet more home to our purpose), he is *God* himself—one with his Father—and must therefore have this authority inseparably belonging to him. Let us, then, consider the rule before us with that attention which is due to infinite wisdom, and with that reverence which is owing to infinite authority.

For the more clear and full understanding of this subject, I shall—

First, state the true meaning of this rule, and show withal with what restrictions it must be understood.

Secondly, I shall enquire somewhat into the natural ground and foundation on whieh it is built.

First, then, I am to state the true meaning of this rule, and to show with what cautions it must be understood.

The general sense of it, at first sight, appears to be this—that whatever good or advantage we should be apt to desire *of* others, that, in our turn, we should be ready to bestow *on* others. All those services and favours (of whatever kind they be) which we do, or might expect from the hands of other men, the same should we grant, when we are in a capacity of granting them, and applied to for that purpose. There is implanted in men a natural desire of good; we are directed to it by our understanding, and we are moved towards it by our affections: the same desires which we feel in ourselves are common to our whole kind, and the import of this rule is, that we should gratify the requests and expectations of others, in the same manner as we wish, or hope, or expect, to be gratified ourselves.

If this be the plain and obvious meaning of the rule, it is evident it must, in like manner, forbid that we should do those ill turns to our neighbour which we ourselves should be apt to resent and grieve at; for we have as much an aversion to evil as we have an appetite and desire of good, and therefore there is as much reason why we should abstain from doing that evil to which, in our own case, we are averse, as can possibly be imagined why we should bestow those favours which we ourselves expect. Men are naturally lovers of themselves. Now this self-love makes us dread evil; at least, as much and in as great a degree as it moves us to desire good. Both these passions are founded in one common principle, and therefore the rule which obliges us to do that good to others which we ourselves desire, must equally bind us to abstain from that evil which we ourselves abhor and dread.

Perhaps it will be found, upon examination, that the rule before us hath a greater force in this latter instance than in the former. It obliges us, without doubt, to good-will in general—to pursue the real interests of our neighbour, of whatsoever kind they be; but freely to do good is a much greater instance of good-will than barely to abstain from doing evil; and therefore, if this rule obliges us to do the one, it must more strongly bind us to avoid the other.

To the observations already offered we may add here, that the rule before us (understood as I have now explained it) is much the same with what our Saviour delivers in another place, where he gives us this command—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This precept, indeed, if understood in too rigorous a sense, may appear to be a hard saying; and there is no one who does, or possibly can, love another with the same degree of affection as himself. But if we understand it in that sense in which I have interpreted the command in the text, all objections will vanish, and the words appear plain and easy. To love our neighbour as ourselves, then, is to treat him in the very same manner as we could wish to be treated by him; to make our own desires, in this respect, the measure of our conduct; and, in this sense, to make the love of ourselves the rule of our love to others.

But however truly the general meaning of a rule be understood, yet, either through inadvertence or perverseness, men are often apt to err in applying it. Thus hath it happened in the case which is now before us.

The precept, then, requires, "that we should do to others as we would be done unto ourselves." From hence some have been apt to run themselves into this mistake, that they are under no obligations to do those services to their neighbour which they neither expect nor desire from him themselves. This perverse interpretation will destroy most of the kind offices of good nature and charity; those, at least, in which a requital is neither needed by the one, nor can be expected from the other. A person, for instance, in plentiful circumstances, is, on most accounts, above the services of the poor, and incapable of being assisted by them, and therefore, as he cannot expect, so neither can he desire their assistance. But shall we therefore say, that a rich man is under no obligations, in virtue of this precept, to do charitable offices to the poor—that he is in nowise bound to bestow an alms, because, in his present circumstances, he neither desires nor needs one? God forbid. This would give such an ill-natured and selfish sense to the precept as is utterly unworthy of a divine teacher.

To apply this rule duly, we must make an exchange of circumstances with our neighbour; that is, we must imagine that we were in his circumstances, and he in ours. This will make the point, in a good measure, clear; and in the general it may be affirmed, that those good offices, which, upon such a change, we might be apt to desire, the same, in the present state of affairs, are we bound to do.

This, I say, holds true in the general, but yet there may be some exceptions made to it; for self-love is not always under the conduct of reason, and passion makes us desire what it may be unfit to grant. No criminal, for instance, can be so much in love with punishment as not to desire (to wish, at least) that he might be exempted from it; and the magistrate himself must be conscious that like desires would arise in him, under the same or like circumstances; yet it doth by no means follow from hence, that it is unjust to vindicate wholesome laws, and to execute wrath upon the disobedient. As the magistrate bears the sword, so he must remember, that it is his duty not to bear the sword in vain. This and the like cases, therefore, must be excepted out of this general rule; and it should be always understood with this reserve, *viz.*, we should do to others what we desire ourselves, when those desires are agreeable with sober reason.

To put another case. A person under the habit and dominion of sin will be exceeding apt to desire all the occasions and opportunities of committing it, and we must be strangers to human nature if we imagine that we ourselves, in the like circumstances, should not desire the same. But will this excuse us, if we give way to the extravagances of the vicious and immoral—if we furnish out matter for riot and debauchery, and encourage, instead of repressing such insolence? By no means. As we must not sin ourselves, so neither must we aid or assist others in the commission of sin. Here we are not to consider what our corrupt appetites might prompt us to desire, if our appetites should get the better of us, but what is best upon the whole, and most suitable to the will and pleasure of God.

But perhaps, after all, the rule will be best understood and least liable to mistake if we restrain the expression, “all things whatsoever,” to matters of strict duty, and, in consequence of this, interpret it in the following manner—“All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you.” Whatsoever ye might expect that your neighbours should, in point of duty, do to you, do ye so unto them. Let us suppose ourselves in our neighbour’s circumstances, and him in ours, and then ask our-

selves this question—what is it which we should ask and expect from him as a matter of duty? The answer which our impartial mind must make to this question will be our proper rule of action.

By this interpretation we avoid the difficulties already mentioned; for whatever desires a criminal might have of escaping punishment, and how earnest soever he might be in his entreaties to the proper magistrate, yet it cannot be supposed that he should expect to be gratified in point of duty. So, again, the habitual sinner wishes the occasions and opportunities of sinning—but can he think that others are obliged to gratify his inclinations? By no means. The cases, therefore, when considered in this light, are so far from being real difficulties, that they do not relate to our present rule at all.

The same observation might be applied to several other instances which are sometimes thought to interfere with this precept, but I forbear entering further into particulars, and I hope the point is now too clear to need it.

Secondly, I shall therefore proceed to the second general head proposed, viz., to show the natural ground and foundation on which the rule before us is built.

Indeed the reasonableness of this injunction is so very apparent, that it may be thought scarce to need a proof; it seems to shine by its own native light. Though a man had never heard of Christ, and were incapable of receiving this precept on the foot of divine revelation, yet, as soon as proposed to him, he could not but approve it as a just and equitable rule. A man must have lost all sense of humanity not to feel, in some sort, the wants of other men. We have a direct consciousness of our own needs; and as there is implanted in us a tenderness for our kind, so we cannot but be sensible (if we duly reflect) of that uneasiness which affects our neighbour. And if we desire relief in our own case, it cannot appear otherwise than fit and proper that we grant it in the case of others.

It is true, indeed, men are not always apt to conform their actions to this excellent rule; self-interest and passion do too frequently get the better of us, and prevail with us to desert our duty. Yet still, however men may contradict this precept in their lives, they have not confidence enough to dispute the equity on which it is built.

The rule here proposed by our blessed Lord is founded on that natural equality which is observable amongst mankind. From whence it follows, that no one man hath, or possibly can have, any natural right beyond another; and, consequently, that the rule of acting between man and man must be one and the same.

For the more clear apprehension of this argument, or rather that it may make the deeper impression on us, I shall distinctly consider the following particulars, viz. :—

That all men are equal as to their nature.

That, by consequence, their natural wants and desires must ordinarily be the same.

And, which is more, that they stand in the same degree of relation to the Supreme Being, their First Cause and Author.

From whence it follows, that they must have one common rule of life ; and nothing is fit and proper to be done to one, which is not, under the same circumstances, as fit to be done to all.

To begin with the natural equality of mankind. We are all of us reasonable beings. We equally consist of a soul and a body—of an immortal and a mortal part. Our natural advantages are the same, and our natural imperfections are all alike ; if we differ from each other, the natural equality is still preserved entire, and we are distinguished by such particulars only as are merely accidental.

We allow readily there may be a difference of parts and capacity in the mind. This oftentimes appears, in fact ; but then, if duly considered, it will be found to arise from something accidental, and therefore can be no proof of an inequality of nature. We see, by experience, that a disease or a misfortune may affect the mind as much as the body, and blot out all our lively images of things. From hence we may conclude, with a good show of reason, that a defect of parts is not owing to any natural want in the soul, but to some bodily disorder, some indisposition in the animal frame ; and therefore is, strictly and properly, accidental.

A difference again there must be allowed with respect to men's station and condition in the world. It is unavoidable but there must be rich and poor ; nor can society itself be maintained without superiors and inferiors. This, however, is very consistent with what I mentioned before, viz., the natural equality of all men. It is plain that the very same person may, at different times, and without the least change in his nature, be either rich or poor, superior or inferior. These several stations or conditions in life are extremely casual ; and however men may be obliged to a different behaviour towards one another, on account of these various relations, yet still, as they continue the very same men, their original and natural equality will remain the same.

In short, they all partake of the same rational mind ; their bodies are formed out of the same common dust, and cast in the same mould. These belong to them merely considered as men ;

and therefore, whatever difference the accidents of life may make between them, they are so far as this upon a level.

It is very remarkable that men of the lowest sense and attainments do often express a consciousness of this principle. They naturally expect a fair and equal treatment; and, when they are rudely handled, are apt to complain that they are not treated as men. So evident is this truth, that it is acknowledged by those who have neither leisure nor capacities for tedious and deep researches. They feel a truth which needs not to be either explained or enforced by accurate and deep reasonings.

And as men are equal in reference to their nature, so are they also as to their ordinary wants and desires. Happiness is equally courted by all men; and misery is as much one man's aversion as another's. Nay, forasmuch as we are endued with the same kind of soul, clothed with the same kind of body, and formed in the same manner, it must be presumed, that, generally speaking, the same objects will be either agreeable or distasteful; so that we may in a good measure learn what are the desires or aversions of others by merely reflecting upon ourselves.

It must be allowed, indeed, that the different methods of education, the different kinds of life, and some variety in the temper and constitution of the body, may make this rule to vary likewise; and it happens sometimes that the very same things may be agreeable or distasteful to different persons; still it should be remembered, that whatever allowances must be made in this respect, yet pleasure is equally every man's desire, and pain is equally his aversion. And therefore there is as much reason why we should consult the happiness of others by all ways which lie within our power, as can be assigned why they should promote ours; why we should abstain from grieving or afflicting others, as can possibly be urged to prove that others ought to abstain from grieving and afflicting us.

Before, therefore, we venture upon any actions which may interfere with the happiness of other men, or conduce to make them miserable, let us only consider our own appetites and passions—what would be our own sentiments in a like case—how we should be apt to regret the loss of a good, or bear the infliction of an evil; the same must be the sentiments of that person we are about to injure. If this be duly attended to, we shall not only discern the equity of this rule, but be strongly incited to the observation of it.

To proceed. Men are equal in another regard, viz., as to the natural relation in which they stand to God. We are all of us created by his power, and preserved by his care. He is the common Father of all mankind; and therefore all mankind are,

in this respect, equally related to him. Now, though matters of grace and favour may be bestowed according to mere will, and the Supreme Being is not accountable for the distribution of his blessings, yet, upon account of this natural relation which all men bear to him, we are sure that every good man is accepted with him.

Nay, he is pleased to regard us so far as to bestow many favours promiscuously on the good and bad, “making the sun to shine, and the rain to descend, on the just and the unjust.”

It is true, indeed, men may forfeit his favour by disobedience to his will; and every sinner, in proportion to his guilt, set himself at a greater or less distance from God. However, he is slow to punish, and ready to forgive, and unwilling that the work of his hands should perish for ever. It is for this reason that so many and powerful motives are used to incite men to reform their lives, and so many offers of pardon and grace made. Thus are we, as creatures of the same Almighty Power, the subjects of the same divine care, and capable of the same divine favour.

If this be the case, it is evident that we must be governed by the same common rules, and have a right to the same common privileges. If God be the Author of all men, and, consequently, that they all stand in the same degree of natural relation to him, it is clear that he must will the happiness of all, as far as that happiness can be obtained consistently with the reason of things and the methods of providence. And if the happiness of all mankind be the will of God, then it is clear that every particular person, in proportion to his abilities, is obliged to contribute to this end; and, of course, that no man hath any more reason to expect the favour and assistance of others in his own concerns, than they have, in their turn, to expect and depend on his.

In short, what is reasonable or unreasonable with respect to any one man, must be equally so with respect to all others in the same case and circumstances—it having been observed already that their natures are all the same, their desires and aversions the same, and the will of God (the common Author of our being) invariably one.

I should run myself out into too great a length by prosecuting those other heads I have proposed to handle on this subject. Having therefore already stated and explained this rule, and endeavoured to fix it on its proper ground and foundation, I shall entreat your patience whilst I just suggest a consideration or two to enforce the observance of it. And—

1. Let us consider, that to deal by others as we might rea-

sonably desire to be dealt by ourselves, cannot but recommend us to the favour of the Supreme Being. I have endeavoured to show, that the acting by this rule is in itself fitting and proper ; and a being perfectly reasonable cannot but approve those beings which act agreeably to reason ; otherwise, why did he implant in us this principle ? Why did he make us intelligent and reasonable beings, unless he intended, at the same time, that we should act in conformity to that reason he gave us ? And if we answer the end and intention of God in bestowing such a nature on us, we cannot but so far approve ourselves in his sight.

To this may be added, that a point so clearly founded in the nature and reason of things is farther enforced by the authority of a positive command : “ Whatsoever ye would (saith our Saviour) that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.” Over and above the consideration that God expressly requires us to conform ourselves to this rule, we may observe besides, that he hath proposed it to us in a way the most engaging—by the ministry of his own Son, sent into the world to promote our present happiness and to secure our future. When such an extraordinary method was taken, the ways proposed to us cannot be of any low import. As the end aimed at was great and amazing, so the means prescribed must be of proportionate consequence and value.

I am sensible that I am addressing myself to persons labouring under the infirmities which the corruption of human nature hath brought upon us. In such circumstances, arguments may be more successful which are in themselves less cogent ; and the considerations of this world may sometimes go farther than those of another.

Let it be considered, therefore, in the next place, that a strict conformity to this rule must recommend us to the approbation and good-will of those persons with whom we deal. I have observed, that it is in itself equitable, and as far forth as men desire to be treated on a foot of equity, they cannot but be pleased with those persons who treat them in this manner. Men may mistake, and make demands on others which are to be gratified ; cases of this nature cannot be guarded against ; but, generally speaking, a fair and upright man—one who makes conscience how he either denies those services to another he might have hoped for himself, or does that prejudice to another which he himself desires to escape—must gain esteem and favour. He will be honoured and beloved ; every one will place a confidence in him. His own concerns in life will go on with fewer difficulties, and whenever they happen, he cannot fail of that assistance from others, which, on many occasions, he hath generously bestowed.

Once more, and to dismiss this subject for the present. To stick invariably to this rule will approve us to our own consciences—will give us occasion of reflecting on our past lives with comfort—will make us easy in life, and support and bear us up under the agonies of death. We cannot but be pleased with thinking that we have acted a fair and equitable part on all occasions; for there is implanted in mankind a natural love of justice, and what we value in others we shall more highly approve in ourselves. This might be confirmed from the experience of every one who hears me. We do, and must always, reflect on this kind of conduct with satisfaction. The same pleasures which arise from the sense of our past equitable behaviour will attend the future; and, which is still infinitely better, the memory of the good we have done in this life we shall carry with us into the other. Our good deeds will, in this sense, follow us, and those things which are at present our duty will hereafter prove our reward.

THE DUTY OF SELF-DENIAL.

BY THE REV. ANDREW SNAPE, D.D., PROVOST OF KING'S COLLEGE,
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MATT. xvi. 24.

Let him deny himself.

As the admission of fallen mankind into a covenant of salvation, through the mediation of his blessed Son, was an act of mere grace and favour on the part of God, so was he perfectly at liberty to impose what terms he pleased upon us, and to stipulate for himself such homage and obedience from us as would conduce most to his honour and glory, so far as he had made us capable of performing it.

And great reason have we to adore his divine goodness, and thankfully to acknowledge his fatherly indulgence, for that he has dealt so graciously with us, in giving us a title to so transcendent a reward, on the performance of conditions so practicable and easy; for so they are in themselves, however difficult and

impracticable they may seem to a listless and unwilling mind, to a sensual and corrupted nature.

In other matters we are ready enough to shake off this lazy and desponding humour, and to proportion our care and labour to the value of the thing we are in pursuit of; and if we reasoned as wisely and acted as steadily in this, our dearest and most valuable concern, we should not think salvation too dearly purchased at the expense of any labour that frail humanity is capable of undergoing.

Even the duty in my text, if we consider the infinite value of the reward that will attend the performance of it, or the gracious assistances that are afforded us toward the better discharge of it, will seem light and easy, and to have nothing in it but what a good man may go through with, and a wise man would choose to undertake.

It is for want of a due reflection on these advantages and encouragements, it is from a lazy inactivity and unreasonable desponding humour, that men complain of the hardships of self-denial, the several acts whereof, as tedious and unwelcome as they seem, are readily enough undertaken by these very complainers on much lower considerations than the prospect of everlasting happiness, and with no other help than the mere strength of their natural faculties; since we cannot suppose the divine grace to co-operate at all with them in such actions as, however commendable in themselves, are directed to some worldly, and, it may be, to some wicked end, without any design of pleasing God, or recommending themselves to his favour by the observance of his laws.

But whatever notions men may form to themselves, as to the easiness or difficulty of this duty, a duty it certainly is, strictly and solemnly enjoined by the Gospel, and made an indispensable condition of salvation. It is required, as a term of that evangelical covenant of which we are the professed members, that we abstain from unlawful pleasures; that we have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness; that we harbour no covetous desires, nor allow ourselves in any unjust or irregular practices for the acquiring of sinful and ungodly mammon; that we take no advantage of the fairest opportunities that may be offered of gratifying any sensual or inordinate passion; that we be reasonable and moderate even in the use of allowable delights, forbearing all manner of excess, keeping always within due bounds, and observing all the necessary restrictions that reason and religion have set to them.

That we take them in due season, in their proper place, and in a fit measure and degree, being fully persuaded in our minds

that an action, otherwise lawful in itself, may become unlawful, when any one of these circumstances is wanting.

That we sit loose as to all the enjoyments of this world, and place not our felicity in them; with great thankfulness receiving and enjoying them, when they may fairly and honestly be compassed, so as not to interfere with our duty to God, nor cross or hinder us in our greatest and most important concern, the work of our salvation; and as readily disclaiming and parting with them, whenever they prove, or are like to prove, our clogs and incumbrances—when we find them attempting either to seduce us into a wrong way, or to retard our progress in the right.

It is, in short, our bounden duty, as we are the disciples and followers of the holy Jesus, to combat with temptations, to resist all unruly and disorderly motions, to stand always on our guard, and be afraid of a surprise; to devote ourselves wholly to God and his service, to offer ourselves living sacrifices unto him, and to part with everything, though never so dear to us, that we know is an offence to him, since it must, of consequence, be so far an offence to ourselves, whether we take it for such or not, as to deprive us of his favour, and render us unworthy objects of his love.

This he expects from us; and he has an undoubted right to this and whatever other service we can render him, because we are his, and all that we have is his; all the faculties of our souls and bodies, all that is in us or belongs to us, we received as his gift and hold at his pleasure, and we must be prepared contentedly to resign them, when they can no longer be innocently enjoyed, when they stand in opposition to his counsels, and hinder the execution of his will. But to explain this duty more particularly—the things we are most loathe to part with, and which are torn from us with almost as much reluctance as the tenderest of our limbs, are the prejudicate conceits of our understanding and the unruly tendencies of our will and affections; and yet even these must be subdued if a man will be Christ's disciple.

However specious and alluring the world may seem, we have solemnly renounced it, with all its pomp. We pretend to be professors of a pure religion, that teaches us to undervalue the most glittering and splendid vanities, and to look upon everything as vile and sordid that stands between us and heaven, and bars up our way to everlasting happiness.

It is true, we cannot forget that we are for the present inhabitants (or, to speak more properly, sojourners) in this lower world; that we are clothed with frail and perishable bodies,

whose continual waste and decay of spirits requires as constant refreshments and supplies.

And, indeed, the pleasing variety of agreeable and entertaining objects with which our great Creator has thought fit to adorn this visible part of his workmanship; the abundant store, even of temporal blessings, which his bountiful hand has scattered among us; the attractive power of sensible objects, and the correspondence between them and human faculties; and, in a word, the plentiful provision he has made for the ease and convenience of life, are so many proofs that these outward comforts were intended for our use and benefit, and were not placed, like the tree of knowledge in the midst of Paradise, to be gazed at and admired, but never tasted.

But, after all these concessions, we must ever be careful to remember, that these things are, at best, the diversions, not the business, of our lives. They are neither allotted to all nor necessary to any. They are sometimes the helps and sometimes the hindrances of our salvation. They are given to some as blessings, to others for their punishment; and a punishment they will prove to all such who do not use them with caution and moderation, and within their proper bounds and limitations—who are not so far masters of themselves as to be able, upon occasion, to forbear as well as to enjoy them.

In conclusion, he that is such a wretched slave to his passions as to rush on blindly in the pursuit of every forbidden object to which his inclination prompts him—who cannot mortify his lusts, subdue his appetites, keep his body in subjection, as St. Paul expresses it, or as our Saviour in my text, deny himself, will make a more foolish and miserable bargain than that of Esau, who parted with his birthright (which he had afterwards cause enough to repent) only to satisfy a present fit of hunger.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

BY THE REV. JAMES CARRINGTON, M.A., CHANCELLOR OF EXETER.

RELATIVE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

BY THE REV. GABRIEL TOWERSON, D.D.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

BY THE REVEREND GABRIEL TOWERSON, D.D.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES WHICH ARE INDETERMINATE.

BY THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON WILLIAM PALEY, D.D.

INTRODUCTION.

It is somewhat remarkable that so few divines have treated on the relative duties. It may be that their due performance has been considered as sufficiently secured by the *faith* which is the foundation of Christianity. But as this volume would be incomplete without especial mention of them, we have devoted the present chapter to their consideration. We shall in this Introduction chiefly confine ourselves to that part of the relative duties which may be comprised in the fifth commandment, because the others are treated on with sufficient distinctness by Dr. Towerson to render it unnecessary for us here to do more than allude to them.

It is related of our Lord, that during his infancy he obeyed his earthly parents, and was subject to them ; and though the nature of the work in which he was engaged did not often lead him to speak of the duty enjoined in the fifth commandment, whenever it did so, he never failed to give it its due weight and importance. To the ruler who asked “How he should inherit eternal life ?” the reply was, “Thou knowest the commandments : do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, honour thy father and mother ;” whereby, in contradiction to the vile traditions of the degenerate Jews, he asserted the authority of the decalogue, and proposed its sanctions to his own disciples. A few remarks on the reasons and the reasonableness of this command will lead us to contemplate the benefits which result to individuals, to the Church, and to the world, by its acceptance—benefits of the highest order.

It is of importance that this command should be obeyed, because it is, perhaps, the only one which applies to early childhood. The other precepts of the moral law are not likely to be violated till the mind and the body have attained a certain degree of maturity ; they apply to passions of which infancy is incapable, and to feelings from which it is exempt. But this may be brought into immediate use ; for as soon as a child can walk and speak, so soon, aye, and often sooner, can it obey or disobey. We are often led by the fashionable philosophical cant of the present day, to think too high of the human capacity—to forget the mist which fell upon the mind of Adam at the

fall, and to expect sound judgment and clear views in others, when we are but too often devoid of them ourselves. He only judges right and thinks clearly, who makes the word of God the rule of his life, and the test of his feelings. And what can we say of the reasoning capacity of the world at large, where none remembereth God, his maker, who giveth songs in the night? We hear of men who are sober and sane upon all topics but one, and we have been told that such is the case with the generality of mankind; but we are slow to apply it to ourselves. We are apt to think ourselves very reasonable and very right in head, however wrong we may be in conduct; and we refuse our assent to the words of the poet, "Men are but children of a larger growth." This is, however, but too generally the case. We may conduct, with tolerable propriety, the affairs of our families, our warehouses, and our shops; but place us in a situation where the powers of abstract reasoning are required, and it will be found that the mind has been stationary from childhood. Hence it is that the child who listens not to the reproof of his parents, will generally turn a deaf ear to the whispers of conscience, the thunders of the law, or the pleadings of the Spirit. Hence it is that the disobedient child becomes a factious and discontented citizen; and the boy who spurns at the restraints of parental authority, is only too likely to resist the control of the State. But if the mind be so early formed as experience teaches us it is, and if the limit of cultivation be so soon attained, then how deeply important is it to inculcate habits of submission and obedience. The infant Milton or Newton (and it is the fashion at present to say that we are all Miltons and Newtons) must be incapable of judging for himself during infancy and early childhood; and if there be no one who can take that care of him which he is incapable of doing for himself, he must shortly perish; and while the mind is thus immature, obedience must be implicit. There must be no hesitation, no questioning—the parent is authorized to command; the child is not able to judge, but is commanded to obey.

There is a duty of the parent to the child; but this is a duty taught by nature. Instinct teaches the savage mother in the wilds of America to love her offspring; and so strong is the force of parental affection, that it needs but little admonition to stir it up. There are few passages which, with the divine sanction, enjoin it, for there are few bosoms in which it does not overflow; but there are many to restrain its excess, many to direct it into a right channel. The filial duty is one of a very different class; it is one of principle, and it arises from gratitude. There is no instinct in the child to love its parents, and there are many

dreadful instances, and new ones are ever arising before our eyes, which prove that principle does not always implant that which it is not the province of instinct to do. Ingratitude of the deepest dye is displayed by many towards those who have the strongest claim to feelings and conduct of an opposite character; and since the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked, this command has been promulgated to check the evil in the bud, and to induce those habits of submission and subordination which (whatever the self-styled enlightened of the present day may tell us) will prepare the mind for the teachings of religion, and be the instruments of our happiness here and hereafter. Can we think that those who sometimes fill the streets of our towns with violence and outrage, were obedient to their parents in their youth? Or that those who fill the gaols of this land, and who will go to swell the numbers of a penal settlement, were meekly submissive to the words of their father and their mother? The question answers itself.

But the commandment does not say obey—it says honour; this is somewhat more. It implies obedience, but does not stop here. Children are not only to do that which their parents enjoin upon them, but they are to do it with cheerfulness, with affectionate respect. Conscious, as for the most part they are, that all the requirements of the authors of their being have their good for their ultimate object, they should reverently submit to their will, and gladly obey their commands. This point cannot be too much insisted upon. The child who returns an insolent answer to its parent, has not only offended God, broken his law, and renounced his promise, but he has laid a foundation upon which Satan will build a fearful superstructure; and when the wrath of God beats upon that house, it shall bear down its inhabitant in its ruins.

“Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land,” was a command given not only to children; it was pronounced to those who were about to enter into the promised land, and is, therefore, applicable to those of whatever age who have parents living. There comes a time, when, of course, the obedience required is no longer to be implicit. When a child is capable of distinguishing between right and wrong, he is then exempt from obeying his parents, if they command him to do that which is contrary to the law of God; but in other cases the alteration in his own mental powers does not alter the duty of obedience; he is bound to conform to those rules which his parents, in the management of their family, have thought fit to appoint: he is bound to labour to contribute to the support of that family, and to uphold its credit, respectability, or dignity.

He is not, till the law by pronouncing him of age has declared him free from parental restraint, at liberty to leave his parents, nor is he at liberty to apply to his own peculiar use even the produce of his own industry. But there comes a time when obedience is no longer binding upon him at all—when he is his own master—and the meaning of the word “honour” is still further modified. It has now a somewhat different signification, though not less important. It enjoins him to support them if in indigence, or to do what he can, honestly and freely, towards it : to treat them with respect, to listen to their opinions with deference, and to show, by his affectionate demeanour, that he has not forgotten the deep debt of gratitude which he owes them. It teaches him to bear with the infirmities of increasing years—to solace them when in pain and sickness, and to give his company to them in preference to younger and gayer companions. Such is the meaning of the fifth commandment ; and that we have not exaggerated, we shall prove from the precepts and the example of our Lord—himself the pattern of perfect human nature on earth, and the express image of his Father’s glory. He was subject to his earthly mother and his reputed father. Neither rebelled He at any time against their will. He spake to the hypocritical Pharisees, who excused a man from supporting his indigent parents, by a stupid tradition of their own, and declared that if a man upon whom the support of his parents devolved, chose to say, “It is corban, or a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me ;”—that is, if he vowed to the temple the money by which they should have been maintained, he might leave them to perish for want. To these our Lord spoke as a reprobator of sin ; he exposed the wretched sophistry of their arguments, and condemned that awful depravity which sanctioned such unnatural iniquity. By the mouth of an inspired apostle, he said, “Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” And when he blessed and put his hands upon children, saying, “Except ye become as little children, ye cannot see the kingdom of God,” he referred to that docile spirit, that unquestioning obedience, which ought to form the character of every child.

We must not dismiss the subject of our Saviour’s obedience, without noticing a phrase which is very much misunderstood ; it is the application of the term “Woman.” “Woman, what have I to do with thee ; mine hour is not yet come.” This may seem at first sight quite inconsistent with that respect, that reverence, upon which we have been just laying such stress ; and the phrase occurs more than once : it will, however, be seen in a very different light when we know that the term was one which would

have been applied to a princess, and have been then considered respectful. It would have been better rendered “lady:” hence, that which at first seemed disrespectful, is proved to be directly the contrary. To show this, we will adduce a passage out of a Greek dramatic poet.* Two shipwrecked wanderers meet a royal priestess, who, finding them doomed to still greater misfortunes, expresses to them her sorrow. They reply, “Why dost thou lament for these things, oh, woman?” These words are addressed to one in a station apparently far above themselves, and to whom they were anxious to show respect. It proves, which might be done from hundreds of similar passages, that the Greek word which we render “woman,” should be translated according to the rank of the person addressed, and would be generally better understood by the term “lady.”

A proof of the uniform respect in which the Lord held Joseph and the Virgin, may be inferred, too, from his conduct, when he remained at Jerusalem: and they supposing him, with their company, had gone on and left him; when they missed him and found that he had been left behind, they returned to fetch him, and reproving him with affectionate earnestness for the anxiety which they had suffered, he replied, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” But he accompanied them back, for it was the business of the Father that the Son should be perfect, and that every part of his earthly course might be an unblemished model for our imitation. Children who are old enough to understand this, are old enough to be responsible for their conduct. God, who made them, and who gave them kind parents to watch over the tender years of their infancy, requires of them in return to love, honour, and obey those parents. If they do, he will bless them. He will bring their minds into a state for the reception of his gracious word, and whether their days shall be long on earth or not, they shall have an entrance into that kingdom of God which endureth for ever. Jesus, who loved them, was once an infant as they are; he grew up to be a child as they are; but he was holy, blameless, and obedient; he set an example that they might follow in his steps, and in so doing they are commanded to “be perfect, even as their Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Submission and obedience, which are the duties of all, are in a double manner the duties of their age. The exercise of these is the only way by which they can testify their love to God; and the neglect of them, the only way by which they can raise their infant voices against him, who speaks as with the noise of many waters and of mighty thunderings.

* Euripides, *Iph. in Taur.*, v. 486.

But it is not only parents whom they are bound to obey and to honour. It is the duty of all to love, honour, and respectfully to obey those who have the care of their education. They have, so long as such children are with them, the authority of parents ; and if they set it at defiance, they break this command of God, and have neither part nor lot in the added promise.

This is the first commandment with promise, and the only one, except that general promise at the conclusion of the second ; and the promise is worth noticing—"That thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Long life, then, is the promise. Life everlasting was the promise to Adam, had he obeyed his heavenly Father ; and life of a long duration is the promise to us, if we obey our earthly parents. This is, however, to be taken with some restriction. The form of the command was adapted to the Jews. The promise, if we take it literally, applies almost wholly to them ; but the way in which we are to understand it is then spiritual : for we cannot blind ourselves to the fact, that the docile and gentle are carried off by early death as often, and more often, than the rude and the disobedient. But there are those upon whose brows Time has written many wrinkles, before they have seen many years. There are those who, in a short space of time, have lived ages, and seen the events which would be sufficient for centuries roll past their eyes in a few months. There are those also, who, in a spiritual view, have shot up at once from being babes to be young men—from being young men to be fathers in Christ ; and in this respect it may be said of such, that "their days have been long in the land."

Now the land which the Lord our God giveth us, what is it ? It is the tract of our Christian experience ; it is the kingdom prepared for those who love him. In the one, our days be long, though our time be short ; in the other, there shall be no limit to our blessedness, no termination to our triumph. It is our duty, therefore, not only to strive ourselves, but to cause, as much as in us lies, others also to strive that their days may be long in the land which the Lord our God giveth us. Much depends on parents as to the obedience of their children ; and though we are not enjoined many times in Holy Scripture to love our children, for to that we are naturally inclined, yet we have many directions given us as to how we should show our love for them. Solomon, who in *his* day was reckoned a wise man, said, "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." But *we* have found out wiser methods than Solomon's. One thing, however, is certain, that whatever means we pursue, we must, if we expect to succeed

in our schemes of education, enforce our own authority, and remember, for the sake of our children, that if we, through parental tenderness, can tolerate and excuse their unruly conduct, they will have to mix in a world which will not tolerate it, and be placed under people that will not excuse it. If we wish them to be useful and happy members of society, we must teach them to revere our authority and to obey our commands. Above all, let them know that it is the will of God that it should be so; and that whosoever chooses to worship Baal, we and our household will serve the Lord. We must make ourselves obeyed, and make those obeyed to whom we entrust the education of our children, and then we may with reason ask the divine blessing on our endeavours, conscious that we have done our part.

We are far from wishing to recommend severity; but it is possible to be strict without being severe: and if our children find that they are the masters, what hope have we of “ruling our households in the fear of the Lord?” Every concession to the spirit of insubordination—every act of disobedience committed with impunity—every insolent speech passed over without notice, are instances of neglect for which parents will have to answer before Him who gave children into their care. If, on the contrary, they make their children obey them in the Lord, train them up in the way in which they should go, and make them, as far as they can, walk therein, then will those children honour their parents and honour God, and their parents will meet them with holy satisfaction in the day of judgment. They will be enabled to say, “Here are we, Lord, and the children whom thou hast given us.”

Finally, if obedience to our earthly parents be so important as to occupy a tenth part of the moral law—if we have had “fathers according to the flesh, and we did them reverence, how much rather shall we not be in subjection to the Father of Spirits and live.” “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” and we shall best show our judgment by keeping the commandments of the Lord. It is in his character, as our heavenly Father, that he is most frequently introduced to our notice in his own holy word. Mercy is his favourite attribute; and when he walked before Moses in the mount, and Moses was hidden in the cleft, it was his *goodness* that passed before him. Moses, with a too daring ardour, said, “I beseech thee, O Lord, show me thy glory!” But the divine answer was, “I will make my *goodness* to pass before thee;” and then was it that the God of the whole earth announced himself as a “God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and of great mercy, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.” This is the God with whom we have

to do, and he will be our Father and our friend ; he will “guide us by his counsel, and afterwards receive us to glory.” If we do truly love him, our implicit obedience he will mercifully accept, and will receive us as his children, and, as St. Paul exclaims, “If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Are we his children? Do we honour him as our heavenly Father, keeping in mind his promise, “They who honour me, I will honour?” Do we show our love for him by our love to his law, his word, his servants, his work? Are we anxious to extend his kingdom? Do we think with gratitude on his countless mercies towards us, and, feeling our own unworthiness, do we bow down with a deep self-abasement before him? If we do, we are the objects of his promise. If we cannot answer these questions satisfactorily, let us reflect that there is yet room at the marriage supper of the Lamb. If we are shut out it will be through our own negligence. By our own act we may make our calling and election sure; and in answer to our prayers, if we pray in faith, nothing doubting, we shall receive the spirit of adoption, and be enabled to cry Abba, Father. Then we shall be assisted to honour God our Father as he should be honoured, and whether our days be long in this life or not, we shall have a kingdom which is not of this world, and a crown which fadeth not away.

C.

CAMBRIDGE.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

BY THE REV. JAMES CARRINGTON, M.A., CHANCELLOR OF EXETER.

EPHESIANS vi. 4.

Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

THE faithful discharge of the duty of a parent is a point of so high importance in every respect, natural, civil, and moral, that it deserves our utmost attention; and yet, perhaps, there is scarce a circumstance in life in which we are more liable to mistakes; for, not to mention those very thoughtless and unhappy wretches, of which sort it is to be hoped there are but few, who have no sooner been the means of introducing a human being into the world, than they abandon it to all the rigours of nature and fortune, it is not uncommon to see persons of a more considerate turn, either pursuing the welfare of their children, in which they think themselves concerned, by means the most unlikely to produce the desired effect, or so intent upon some favourite article, as to leave others of equal, or perhaps greater, importance entirely out of their plan.

The decoration and embellishment of the person is too often that favourite article; for this no care or expense is thought too much, and it is well if it be not sometimes established upon the ruin of more solid and valuable advantages. If these transitory acquisitions are to be purchased with the loss, or considerable diminution, of those fortunes, which should supply the conveniences, or perhaps the necessaries, of life through the whole course of it in this world; or if beauty of form, grace of motion, and elegance of habit are consulted, to the utter exclusion of religion, virtue, and useful knowledge, it is very certain that there will come a time when a moderate share of those things we have sacrificed will appear to have been ill exchanged for a distinguished eminence in the possession of those trifles which we have received instead of them.

On the other hand, we sometimes see the embellishments

both of mind and person, considered as little better than superfluous, and the whole application is turned to wealth or power; the reputation of being rich or great weighs much heavier with the worldly man than that of being wise and virtuous, and, of consequence, he confines the whole duty of a parent within the narrow limits of multiplying his acres—the arts of acquiring and preserving are the only arts his children are instructed in, and a full coffer the sole memorial he desires to leave them of his paternal tenderness and regard. The happiness of his children is the great point which every father should labour to establish; but there goes more to constitute that than wealth, titles, or politeness; accordingly, he who does not endeavour to secure to his son a treasure, which neither rust nor moth can corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal, exposes him to the most cruel kind of poverty and distress, and leaves him, in the midst of affluence, a wretch and a beggar.

To support, therefore, should be added instruction; and, under those two heads, we may take a view of the whole office or duty of a parent. With regard to the former, all that is necessary for some years is to consult the health of the infant by a convenient quantity of wholesome food. I shall not pretend to give any particular directions on this article, as it would be encroaching on a province which does not belong to me, and in which I am conscious of being too little skilled to acquit myself with any tolerable grace; I shall, therefore, content myself with advising parents to consult carefully such treatises as are most approved upon the subject, or persons in whose knowledge and integrity they can confide, and to pursue steadily the plan which gives the fairest prospect of success. Of all temporal good things, I believe it will be universally acknowledged there are none which stand in competition with health. If wealth, power, beauty, or wisdom would purchase it the bargain would be soon made; every man must be sensible, from his own experience, that is, so far as it depends upon human prudence, is the most valuable legacy a parent can bequeath a child, and yet how often do we find a gross neglect, or a mistaken fondness in this particular, destroy it in its bud, blast the most promising prospect, and lay the foundation of distempers, which are sufficient to give a disrelish to everything we have it in our power to confer on our children beside, and to throw a melancholy gloom over the whole course of their lives. A very little reflection must convince every person who has any sense of humanity, how inexcusable it is not to attend to a point of so much importance with all possible care and discretion.

This indolence, however, does not run through our whole

conduct—the article of decoration is unhappily remarkable for the other extreme—raiment is undoubtedly a part of that support which a parent owes to a child as well as food ; but then it ought to be proportioned, not only to our present circumstances and situation in life, but to our future prospects, with regard to the child's establishment, and the station he is in all probability to appear in hereafter in the world. And I believe it will be always found much safer to abate somewhat of what our fortunes may allow, or the world expects from us in this particular, than to go beyond it. Vanity is a passion into which young minds are too easily betrayed ; and it is nowonder if children accustom themselves to consider these things in such a light as may have a very unhappy influence on the rest of their lives. By much the greatest part of mankind are obliged to derive their subsistence from industry and application ; many owe it to the most laborious and servile employments. From the children of the present age the next is to be supplied with artisans, labourers, and servants ; but, if we may judge by appearrnce, where are we to look for such ? Those whom, in other respects, we think the properest to be applied to on this occasion, by their habit, seem rather designed to command than to serve us ; and can we suppose that they, who have been taught to know no distinction between themselves and such as are greatly their superiors both in birth and fortune, who have received the same homage from the misjudging crowd, can sink at once into modest and obedient servants ? I fear the transition is too difficult and unnatural to be expected ; on the contrary, no method, how wicked soever, will be left untried to support the fancied equality—in short, if negligence and inattention to one part of their support have rendered half our children little better than walking hospitals, a ridiculous, nay, I must add, a wicked attachment to the other, bids fair for fixing the other half, idle, vain, conceited fantastical thieves, beggars and vagabonds. In both cases, how ill do we acquit ourselves to the community of which we are members ! Surely every thinking man must tremble at the prospect of these evils of which our unhappy mistakes in those particulars, more especially the latter, must inevitably lay the foundation.

As the child advances in age, the care of the parent increases in proportion ; no sooner have the little wants of infancy been supplied, than it becomes necessary to turn our attention to their settlement in the world, and to see that those to whom we have given life as far as it lies in our power to contribute to it, pass through it with all possible decency, satisfaction, and comfort to themselves, and utility to the commonwealth. We must

be careful to make such provision for them as our situation and circumstances will admit of—nor are we to suppose that we have a right to squander away the means, be it more or less, which it hath pleased Providence to assign for that purpose. If our fortunes descended to us from our parents, we are, in fact, no more than stewards for our children, who have a natural right to succeed to them. If what we possess be entirely of our own acquiring, the case is still nearly the same ; for the children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for the children ; and if a man provide not for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. So that we cannot call any more than is necessary for a decent and honest support properly our own ; nor will the having gained a fortune, with the labour of a horse, justify us in throwing it away again with the folly of an ass, or in otherwise disposing of it, without very extraordinary reasons indeed, to the prejudice of those whom nature and religion point out as the proper inheritors. It is common to distinguish those parents who neglect to make proper provision for their children, according to their stations and abilities, by the title of brutes. I am sorry to say that order of the creation suffers by the comparison. If we look through the several species of the animal world, we shall find the instances of such behaviour extremely rare. With what an amorous sedulity do we see most of those creatures with whom we are acquainted, watching over their young, encountering every labour, nor declining any hazard to minister to their wants ! Nor do they ever seem to think their task at an end, till nature has put it in the power of their offspring to subsist independently of them. Till then, no profligate or drunkard, no spendthrift father, no wanton gamester, sacrifices their ease and happiness to madness and intemperance, those honours are reserved for the great brutes of reason ; but every thought, every action tends, their whole force is exerted, to support and sweeten the life they were instrumental in giving, and, in many of them, we cannot but observe such an attachment, such a strength of tenderness, as might do honour to human nature.

I will not deny but that the behaviour of the child is to be considered—and there may be circumstances which will excuse a parent acting with a more niggard and sparing hand in this respect than his abilities might allow of, but very few which will warrant an entire disregard. They must be extraordinary instances indeed of misbehaviour on the child's part, which will give the parent a right to expose him to all the miseries of distress and indigence, in violation of one of the greatest and most affecting laws of nature ; and, I doubt, such a conduct—for,

wicked and unnatural as it is, we have not wanted examples of it—is often founded as much in the humour and caprice of the parent (for, give me leave to say, a parent may be unreasonable, as well as a child undutiful) as in the misbehaviour of his children; and it is far from being impossible, that the very crimes we take upon us to resent so heinously, may be no more than the result of our own negligence or ill management in their education, and for which, of consequence, it will not be difficult to determine which is the proper object of punishment, which only of pity and compassion. I shall only add, on this head, that in introducing a child into the world, as it is called, particular regard should be had to his own genius and inclination, that it may appear we are rather consulting the future ease and happiness of the child than how to rid ourselves of the present expense and trouble of supporting him any longer; in short, everything is to be avoided which may justly provoke them to wrath, which to rob them of their inheritance—to withhold from them a decent supply of the necessaries or conveniences of life, according to our stations and abilities—to show a careless indifference with regard to their health, their peace of mind, their ease and happiness, cannot fail to do.

Thus having laid before you all that we deemed needful on the first article of our text, we shall now, without further preface, enter on the second, namely, that our children should be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In the close of the baptismal office, the Church, directing herself to the sponsors, requires them to remember, that it is their parts and duties to see that the infant then baptized be taught, so soon as he shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he hath there made by them; they are farther, and that chiefly, to provide that he may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, in the vulgar tongue, and all other things, indeed, which a Christian ought to know and believe, to his soul's health; and that he may also be brought up to lead a godly and Christian life. Now all this is, in an eminent manner, the duty of the parent, who is indeed sponsor in chief, and to whom the rest are but appointed as coadjutors, to advise and assist them in it.

The first step to be taken in the article of instruction, is to make the child acquainted with his own origin—his first extraction from his Almighty Creator—his dependence, in all respects, on his care and providence, and the constant and uniform obedience which he owes him. The principles of virtue and vice are to be explained to him, and every possible method pursued to render the one truly amiable, the other detestable, in his eyes.

As he advances in point of comprehension, he must be forwarded in knowledge, and initiated into the principles of our holy religion. It is here he should be taught what a solemn vow, promise, and profession he made, by his sponsors, in baptism, and by all means instructed and exhorted to fulfil it ; and, being made acquainted with those things which a Christian ought to know and believe, to his soul's health, should have them duly explained to him, every lesson being accompanied with serious and devout exhortations to lead a godly and a Christian life.

It is to be feared that many are so deficient in this respect as scarce even to take the pains to inform their children of the name of that religion into which they were baptized ; to the very fundamental principles of it, however, many are suffered to remain as absolute strangers as if they were not members of a Christian community. It is in vain to answer, that proper means are wanting ; if the parents themselves are not qualified to discharge this office, God hath not left his vineyard so bare of labourers but that some may be readily found who are. Nor is poverty a better excuse than ignorance ; for though a parent may not have it in his power to provide food and raiment for his children, or to give him lectures in science, yet no one is either too poor or too ignorant to teach them common honesty, and to point out to them the proper means of being informed of whatever else is required of them.

The way is before pointed out to them : they are to call upon them frequently to hear sermons—to attend the public service of Almighty God—a due regard to which will, I hope, always leave them without the excuse of not knowing their duty.

The most probable means of ensuring success to our endeavours in this important article of instruction, is, to begin early with it—it is not to be delayed, and put off from time to time, with idle, trifling excuses, as if it were always soon enough to set about it ; for as the infant mind is like a blank table, capable of receiving any impressions, if we are not careful to stamp it early with such as it ought to bear, it is not impossible but that the wicked contriver of all mischief may be before-hand with us, and render it so black, with his own accursed tenets, that we may not afterwards find room to insert a single line of wholesome instruction or advice.

“ It is a kind of postulatum in spirituality, that men end as they have begun, and die as they live ; and, indeed, experience, as well as Scripture, teaches, that the last act of our lives is, generally speaking, but a copy of the first. Virtue, planted in the spring of youth, thrives to admiration ; it flowers in the very winter of age ; it blooms in the grave, and breathes forth per-

fumes when our bodies exhale infection. Now, if an early virtue casts its root so low, that the blasts of impetuous passions are not able to shake it, vice certainly will be as lasting; like a weed, it grows upon us insensibly; in process of time it winds and twists itself with our very nature; it sinks into our bones, and not only conveys the infection through all the humours of the body, but corrupts the very faculties of the soul; so that, like chronical distempers, it accompanies us to our coffins—it sleeps with us in the grave—and will burn with us in hell."

The Emperor M. Antonius, among other things, professes himself obliged to the gods for not suffering him to make any great advances in rhetoric, poetry, and such other amusements, and that he had not spent much time in voluminous reading, logic, and making physical experiments; indeed, such kinds of studies are apt often to engross the attention, and to draw off the mind from a relish to more solid and beneficial knowledge; and it is certain that criticism, poetry, or mathematics, are neither of them the standard by which we are to be tried. Perhaps the emperor might carry it too far; however, it may be a very proper caution, in general, not to suffer too many tares to be sown among our wheat, but to exclude, or at least to defer, the florid and frothy parts of learning till the mind is perfectly able to digest them, to distinguish substances from shadows, and to respect and use them as they deserve: but, above all things, we should guard against books which are worse than indifferent, such as have an immoral tendency, and these are, to the reproach of this age and nation, by much too numerous.

The romance and drama of the ancients were formed upon very different models from those of our times, and designed only as an agreeable medium for the conveyance of some useful lesson in religion or morality. The plain bent of our modern ones, some few only excepted, is to debase and debanch the mind, rather than to embellish and improve it.

But the best general rule that can be laid down, with regard to instruction, is, that in this, as in the article of support, the eye should be intent on this child's future prospect in life, and care taken to enable him to appear with decency, at least, in that station he is probably to bear in the community of which he is a member. It is no more necessary for a tailor, or a blacksmith, to be a logician, an orator, or a politician, than for a senator to be versed in the mysteries of the needle and the anvil; on the other hand, nothing can surely be more absurd than to see a legislator a stranger to polite and useful literature. The very reason which ought to engage a child's particular application to knowledge is often given in excuse for his igno-

rance; but an affluent fortune alone does not constitute a great man; and it is surely the height of folly to think a single qualification, which often only enables a man to do mischief, a sufficient compensation for those which might do honour and service to his country. I must observe, that this duty of instruction continues beyond the child's infancy, and, indeed, never ceases to bind the parent; we are still to watch over their souls, to observe how they practice those precepts which were given them in their education, and accordingly to exhort, encourage, admonish, or reprove them, as we see occasion, through the whole course of their lives.

A very necessary part of instruction is correction: a child left to himself bringeth to shame, but the rod and reproof give wisdom. I do not mean that the parent's hand should never be without the rod, since I am very well satisfied it sometimes does more harm than good; however, in a judicious hand, it is a very necessary and useful instrument, the great art lies in applying it properly. To correct a child for every little trifling fault—for a slip in grammar or orthography—is no great proof of a parent's affection; on the other hand, to take no notice of an offence against virtue and religion—to suffer the most dangerous vices to grow up with him, for want of timely chastisement—to run the hazard of his eternal ruin rather than draw a tear from him; to spare the rod, in this case, is certainly to hate the child, for the pain from which our mistaken tenderness preserves him at the instant, bears no proportion to what he must probably suffer in exchange for it. I can readily allow the affection of a parent to rise to the greatest possible height. I can more than excuse all the tender sensations he feels on the occasion, and pity the distresses of his own heart, whilst his hand administers the necessary chastisement; but correction is far from being incompatible with the very highest degree of affection—it is impossible to show a true regard without it. The child who is suffered always to escape it is, in the apostle's language, rather a bastard than a son. Let not thy soul, therefore, spare for his crying; for if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die.

In order to make correction answer more effectually the good ends for which it is administered, it is absolutely necessary that it be subjected to the following regulations. In the first place, it ought to be proportioned to the fault—when all faults are punished with equal severity, it gives the child a false notion of virtue and vice, and makes him guard as little against the greatest as the most trivial offence; secondly, like instruction, it should be applied early; and, thirdly, it should be administered in a cool and dispassionate manner, not in the heat of rage and anger,

when, beside the danger of its being made too severe, it might be apt to lead the child into a mistake, and tempt him to fancy that he was not corrected so much because he had offended as because he was out of humour. Besides, it ought always to be accompanied, not with hasty, rash, and scurrilous language, which is generally the effect of passion, but with mild and sober reproofs and admonitions, that the child may be made truly sensible of the justice of his punishment, and, as it were, feel his folly as well as the rod.

To correction should be subjoined, on proper occasions, encouragement; gentle means must be used as well as harsh, and more or less of each, according to the natural temper and disposition of the child, which ought to be carefully studied, and that method accordingly pursued which is most likely to be prevalent and successful. A child of a soft, mild nature, may be beat into stubbornness and vice; while indulgence and forbearance to the untoward one, may only confirm and harden him in his wicked and dangerous obstinacy. A perpetual smile of applause upon the parent's countenance may excite such a spirit of conceit and vanity in the child's breast as may have a very ill effect on the whole tenor of his conduct; but a continued frown is discouraging—it is destructive to the authority of the parent, which is never founded half so strongly in fear as in filial love and esteem, and no less an enemy to the cause of religion and virtue—as the child will naturally contract a prejudice against a character which he is made to believe cannot be supported but upon such austere and rigid principles. The proper course to be steered is, if it can be hit upon, a mean between harshness and indulgence; not always smiling, nor always frowning, but as occasion and the child's behaviour shall require. And in both it is necessary to show ourselves in earnest. We ought to express a real resentment at the child's faults, and a real satisfaction and complacency when he behaves well; to correct him as if we were angry, and to reward him as if we were pleased, and not, as is the silly practice of too many, to confound and destroy all the purposes, both of correction and encouragement, by beating him unmercifully one minute, and cajoling and fondling him as unreasonably the next.

Under the article of encouragement, I cannot omit mentioning a very necessary circumstance in the duty of a parent, which is impartiality. Where nature has constituted such an equality, undoubtedly the affection and regard of the parent ought to be equally dispensed; but if by some unaccountable caprice a parent find this impracticable, in reality, yet the appearance of it, at least, should be carefully kept up, and whatever distinc-

tions are made they should have no apparent foundation but in the absolute merit of the object—a superior attachment to any of our children is often productive of the most unfortunate and melancholy consequences.

The last, but not the least, important part of instruction is example, which will ever have a much stronger influence than precept, and on which depends, in a great measure, the success of all the rest. For this reason I would, in the first place, particularly recommend it to parents to keep their children as much as possible under their own eye; it is a truth few will controvert, that evil communication corrupts good manners. Our streets swarm with bad examples, which, by the way, are much sooner imitated than good ones; the parent's presence would be a considerable restraint upon those liberties in which children are apt to indulge when left to themselves. But then, indeed, the parent should have a strict regard to his own actions—every one of which should be a kind of *praxis* on his lectures—nor suffer even a word to escape him which has an irreligious or an immoral tendency. It is in vain for the parent to tell his child that lewdness, blasphemy, swearing, and such things are faults which will be severely punished, if he is himself daily guilty of them; the child may well call in question his sincerity, for if he in reality believed the doctrine to be true, he would certainly have more regard to his own conduct—in short, he whose words speak virtue and his actions vice, may as well hold his tongue; the latter is the most persuasive language, and wisdom may lift up her voice in vain, if words be all she has to offer in support of her argument. Would we persuade our children that there is a Supreme Being—that he sees all our actions—that we are dependent on him for everything we enjoy, we must convince them of our own faith in these articles by our works, and express a sense of our dependence in every action of our lives. They will kneel to God with a readier humility when we kneel with them; and will shun vice and intemperance the more earnestly when they have reason to believe our abhorrence of them is more than pretence, by seeing us abstain carefully from them ourselves—in a word, they will be impatient to become perfect in virtue, of which the pattern is continually before them, and ashamed, as well as afraid, to be guilty of a vice, of which, in the whole tenor of their parent's conduct, they do not see any example. What a deal of wickedness has that poor wretch to answer for, whose example breathes nothing but vice! What a scene of horror must it be to see whole families, in a manner, strangers to all conversation but what consists in ribaldry, blasphemy, and execrations! To see drunkenness, uncleanness,

dishonesty, and every conceivable vice recommended, as it were, to the imitation of the children by the constant and shameful practice of the parent ! How dreadful must it be to them to see their children rising up in judgment against them at the last day, charging them as the wicked occasion of their miscarriage, and joining, as it were, with the devils to torment them by continual curses and reproaches !

On the contrary, the family of the virtuous man is a little heaven. His children have no emulation but who shall be best and most like their father ; and they have a previous, but indeed imperfect, taste of that serene and tranquil happiness which they shall hereafter enjoy at God's right hand for evermore.

I hope I have need to add very little by way of incentive to the practice of this duty of a parent ; a matter on which the whole future happiness of the child, both here and hereafter, so absolutely depends, and in which, as an additional consideration, the good of the community is so deeply concerned, comes so strongly recommended by reason and nature, that arguments from any other quarter seem impertinent and unnecessary.

EPHESIANS vi. 2, 3.

Honour thy father and thy mother, which is the first commandment of promise, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth.

In the moral system there are some duties so remarkably natural and obvious, that arguments drawn from any other quarter than the heart seem ridiculous and absurd, and even admonitions superfluous and unnecessary ; such is apparently the duty which children owe to their natural parents, from whom—if the parents discharge their own duty in any tolerable degree—they derive such obligations as with all their care and attention they will not find it easy to repay. Even the heathen world considered it as the foundation of all moral virtues, and it was a remark of one of their most esteemed philosophers, that “ nature is our first and best instructor in the article of filial piety, which, unassisted by speech or language, she impresses on our hearts in tacit but affecting characters.” The same writer elsewhere observes, “ That to throw off this regard for his parents is almost the highest pitch of wickedness at which a man can pos-

sibly arrive." What nature dictates, gratitude and common justice, indeed, sufficiently confirm. "Of all the benefits that can possibly be conferred on us, none (says Seneca) are equal to those which we receive from our parents, at a time when we are incapable of thinking or willing for ourselves; when infants, we owe our health to the wholesome regimen they oblige us to observe. They consult the strength and beauty of our limbs, and preserve us from deformity, even in spite of our own folly and obstinate perverseness; as we advance in years, they omit no method of improving us in useful knowledge, how disagreeable soever it may be to us. Our youth is formed to the practice of frugality, modesty, and all the moral virtues, by their care and application, and they do not decline even the laborious task of opposing our headstrong passions, in order to lead us to honour and happiness whether we will or not." These, whatever we may think of them at the time when they are conferred, are real and very essential obligations; the care and trouble which attends these necessary tasks is too considerable to admit of their being undertaken by indifferent persons, and nothing but the fondest attachment can carry a parent through the disagreeable and laborious office. But not to insist on a point so very obvious—so affectingly dictated by nature—so firmly established by reason—and so strongly enforced by religion—let us, for the present, turn our attention to a matter in which, perhaps, every one may not be so well instructed, and see how this obligation may be best discharged. The command is, that we "honour our father and mother." The following observation will, I conceive, show wherein that honour consists. The term is very comprehensive, implying reverence, love, esteem, obedience, submission, defence, support; soul and body are equally concerned in the discharge of it, and actions, words, and even thoughts themselves, are to be employed in expressing it.

With regard to reverence, a parent should always be addressed in a decent, respectful manner; pert and saucy repartees, surly and morose answers, ill become the mouth of a child. His parent is his legal superior—and even to an equal or inferior, insolent and haughty language is extremely indecent. Proper appellations are to be used, according to their stations in life, and if expostulations become necessary, they ought to be expressed in the mildest and most reverent terms. This should also be attended with suitable gestures of body; for contempt is as easily expressed by actions as words. If any person were to address us in the politest and most obliging language, and accompany his speech with a clownish, slovenly, disrespectful behaviour, I presume, we should think ourselves little indebted

to him for his compliment. Actions are most properly the language of the heart ; we are not always to expect a courtly address, which depends upon education, and various other circumstances. But Nature is so good a preceptress in this case, that he who is in earnest in his protestations of filial duty and esteem, will never be at a loss to distinguish with what kind of gestures they ought to be attended. We are not only to speak reverently to, but also of, our parents. If they have infirmities, as I suppose few are without, we are not to jest upon them among our gay and giddy companions ; on the contrary, if we hear others speaking of them in any respect to their discredit, we ought, if we know or believe the reflections to be ill-grounded, to vindicate them to the utmost of our power, and modestly to reprove the slanderer. If we cannot disprove them, yet we ought, however, to excuse and palliate them in the best manner we can ; and at last, if there be no other method left, to retire, at least, from a conversation of which we can no longer be witnesses with innocence. Lastly, we are not only to speak, but even to think of our parents with reverence ; not to impute to them, in our minds, faults of which, perhaps, they never were guilty ; and even, as far as possible, to conceal from ourselves such failings as may in reality belong to them—like the dutiful and affectionate sons of the intoxicated patriarch, who endeavoured to hide, not only from the eyes of the world, but even from their own, the infirmities which their unnatural brother had impiously published and derided. To accustom ourselves to think of the failings of a parent must, in the end, be destructive of all love, esteem, and obedience—must tempt us in time to think with contempt of his person and understanding ; and God knows where such sentiments may end with regard to them. With respect to ourselves, however, we know that the eye which mocketh his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

The love which a child owes to his parent, if it be real and sincere, will show itself in endeavouring, by all possible means, to promote his interest and happiness, and by avoiding everything which may give him uneasiness or disgust. His principal study and delight will be to make glad the heart of his father, and to comfort the soul of his mother. He will constantly weep with them when they weep, and rejoice with them when they rejoice ; and it will be as impossible for him to derive pleasure from the objects which give them pain, as to be poisoned by the food which nourishes, or chilled by the sun which warms, them. Hence will arise a respectfulness in language and behaviour, a steady and uniform obedience, an anxious sedulity for their wel-

fare, and an unwearied application in endeavouring to promote it. He will submit cheerfully to hardships and inconveniences, in order to remove or alleviate theirs, and expose himself fearlessly to every danger when their defence and preservation render it necessary. He who is sensible of a reluctance in any of these points, may be assured he falls short of that love which every parent has a right to from his offspring, and from which no conduct of his can give his children a just and warrantable exemption. In general, indeed, this is no more than is exacted by common gratitude. This is the love which most children have experienced from their parents ; this is the love which we are very soon sensible actuates our own hearts in the same situation, and the emotions we feel render us better acquainted with those we have formerly created. I must not omit a very necessary part of love, which is to pray for them, and to beg of the Almighty to bless and reward them for those several kindnesses for which it is absolutely out of our power ever to make them a sufficient and adequate recompense. History furnishes us with very affecting instances of filial piety, where children have cheerfully exposed themselves to the most imminent dangers, in order to preserve a life much dearer to them than their own. The known story of the Roman young woman, who supported her parent in one of the public prisons with the milk of her own breast, reflects too strong a disgrace on many, who, together with the same mistress, Nature, have the farther advantage of the most perfect and most benevolent of religions.

The third duty a child owes to his parent is obedience. This is a duty very extensive, as well in nature as duration—it commences with our earliest infancy, and continues, in a great measure, to the last period of our lives. In our tender years, while we are more immediately under their inspection, their injunctions, with regard to our diet, our diversions, our companions, ought to be punctually observed ; indeed, it is rather interest than duty that requires this from us. The rules which a parent prescribes with regard to food, physic, &c., are intended as the foundation of our health—one of the most valuable blessings it is possible for them to convey to us. With regard to diversions, those which children would choose for themselves often carry unseen danger in them, and a parent very often preserves the life or limbs of a child by a prohibition which they are then silly enough to suppose levelled only at their pleasures, and therefore the effect of moroseness and ill humour. But in no respect does this rule require to be observed more than in the article of their companions. It is impossible for children, or young people, to be judges who are proper to make choice of

for that purpose ; those very qualifications with which they are most pleased in their play-mates may be such as they ought most to shun and avoid them for. An experienced eye can more easily discern vice under its most artful disguise. It is a fatal mistake in children to suppose their parents have no other view than merely to contradict and cross them ; I believe it would not be difficult to furnish instances, where the dissolute life, and, perhaps, ignominious death, of those whose company young people have thought it hardest to be debarred from, have unhappily justified the decision of their most prudent and affectionate parent.

As the child advances in years, other circumstances will continually occur, to give him an opportunity of exerting this duty. The parent has certainly a right to direct him, in a great measure, in the choice of his studies, business, &c. He is certainly the best judge how far his own abilities extend, with regard to making provision for his family. He sees on which side his prospects are most promising, and what station of life his child will in all probability answer both public and private advantage, become a serviceable member of the commonwealth, an ornament to his family, and bid fairest for satisfaction and happiness in himself. For this reason, whatever reluctance a child finds within himself to comply with his parent's proposal, he should endeavour by all means to get the better of it, and if the parent should happen to be mistaken, let him consider that at his time of life it is much more probable that he should judge wrong himself, and, let things turn out how they will, he will have little reason to doubt but that all was designed for the best ; and, in the mean time, he will at least have the satisfaction of having done his duty, and for that very reason, if no other, may justly expect the particular favour of Providence upon his honest and well-intentioned undertakings. It is no part of my present business to consider how far a parent is concerned in this affair —undoubtedly there is a great charge incumbent upon him. The child, however, has no right to suppose that he does not acquit himself of it to the best of his power. Obedience is his proper province, not counsel and forecast. He must be content with behaving as a son, however his parent may be mistaken in acting as a father, and leave the issue to that Being whom he may be assured, from his repeated promises, such a conduct will not fail to interest in his behalf.

These are the most essential particulars in which a parent has an indisputable right to the child's obedience. In the mean time, a thousand circumstances will occur of a more indifferent nature, in which it will be also indispensably requisite. There

are few parents who have not occasion to lay commands upon their children every day, and several times in a day, to all of which they ought to pay a constant and cheerful obedience. Every command of a parent is sacred which does not clash with the laws of God, or of nature, or of their country ; these no authority of a parent ought to prevail on a child to violate. He is not to rob, murder, swear, lie, injure any other part of his family, indifferent person, or his own constitution ; to be a bad husband to his wife, an unnatural father to his own children, or a rebel and traitor to his prince, because his parent requires it of him ; but wherever these prior obligations are not affected, the apostolic rule must be inviolably observed : “ Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is right.”

Submission under correction is a very necessary part of obedience. It is so very natural for children to deserve chastisement, and so much the duty of a parent to administer it on every proper occasion, that the apostle supposes, that he who always escapes it owes not his security to his own inculpability, but to want of natural affection in his parent, who treats him rather as a surreptitious child, for whose welfare he is not concerned, than as his own natural offspring. The wise son of David makes several observations to the same effect. A child, therefore, when he is corrected, is not to murmur at his parent, to throw himself into passions, or harbour any secret grudge or resentment upon it. He is to take it for granted that the affection of his parent and his own welfare were the real motives to it ; that more may be at stake than he is aware of, which the discerning eye of a prudent parent may, however, be able to discover ; and that those few stripes he has just received, how grievous soever they might seem to him at the instant, may possibly have rescued him from some severer and more durable pain—at least, that they were intended for that purpose, and therefore deserve rather an increase of love and gratitude than hard thoughts, unnatural anger, and impious resentments. Even if correction should happen to be unreasonable or unjust, still it must be borne with submission and patience, as coming from a hand which God and nature forbid them to resist, and all they have a right to do, is to endeavour, by every possible act of filial tenderness and piety, to alleviate it for the present, and to avoid it for the future. Even the heathen philosophy could teach this lesson. *Ælian* tells us of a certain youth, who being asked by his father what he had learned during his long residence at Zeno’s school, replied, that his actions should show his improvement ; and when the father, dissatisfied with the answer, flew into a passion, and gave him several blows, he took it all in good

part, saying, "This, sir, is one thing I have learned—to bear your anger with a patient and submissive deference."

At a time of life when children may suppose themselves released from this positive obedience, and in matters wherein it seems reasonable enough that they should be allowed to think for themselves, the obligation still subsists in another shape. If the parent has not an absolute right to command, it is, however, his province to advise, and his advice ought ever to be attended to, and followed, unless such reasons can be shown to the contrary as any competent judge will be satisfied with. There is a great deal of truth in the common remark, that "young people think old ones fools, but old people know young ones to be so." They have bought their experience—they have passed through those stages of life which they charge with folly—they remember their own sentiments and conduct, and have lived long enough to see that they were wrong; this gives them a right to advise, and none but a headstrong fool will be deaf to the admonition. I forbear entering into particulars; give me leave, however, just to mention one circumstance, which, I think, few who have treated on this subject have omitted, that is, marriage. Those who determine that the parent has an absolute right to command in this case have, perhaps, carried it too far, at least, with regard to the positive side of the question; but surely they ought to be consulted. Their reason for or against should be calmly and impartially weighed, and their determination submitted to, without very good reason to the contrary. One of the first and most affecting laws of nature, indeed, seems to interfere in our behalf, if we refuse, at the command of a parent, to marry a person whom we find it absolutely impossible ever to love as a husband or wife; but as every good and prudent parent will give up this point, it seems but reasonable that their negative authority should remain inviolate, and no marriage take place which has not their sanction, and especially of which they have signified any particular disapprobation or dislike.

The last duty I shall mention may be comprehended under the general term succour. The child is indispensably bound to administer to all the wants of his parent, to the utmost of his power, so long as he lives; nor is there, indeed, any part of this duty which, exclusive of other considerations, common gratitude does not suggest and recommend to us. Do their declining intellects require our assistance in the ordering their worldly affairs? There was a time when we were incapable of all management of ourselves, during which they acted the part of faithful and provident stewards for us. Are they in a state of mind which requires comfort and consolation? They have a

thousand times performed that kind office for us when our griefs, perhaps, were only imaginary. Have they infirmities which may be alleviated by any art or redress of ours, or by a patient and dutiful submission to them? How many wayward humours have they borne in us for years together? Is their situation such, in point of estate, that our assistance may make life more comfortable and easy to them? Who protected us from hunger and thirst, from cold and nakedness, when we were utterly unable to do the least office for ourselves, or to contribute the least mite to our support? In a word, to whom are we indebted in general for all we ourselves possess, for an exemption from those distresses which require our help, and for the very power which we are bound to exert in the relief of them? Lastly, is our assistance necessary to defend them from any injury or violence? How dear has our life, health, and limbs ever been to them? And, in a word, is there a danger which, had occasion offered, they would have declined for our defence and preservation?

Such is the duty a child owes to his parent. How devoutly were it to be wished, that the general practice were more conformable to this rule! The precept enjoins a decent and respectful behaviour, and that we should address them ever in terms of reverence; on the contrary, too many children behave to their parents as if they were rather their equals, or indeed their inferiors, and scruple not to speak to them in the rudest and most approbrious language. Instead of that love and esteem which they owe them, too many seem to look upon their parents as their greatest enemies; their obedience is either entirely thrown off, and they take a particular pleasure in thwarting and crossing them, or it is kept up only by some worldly considerations, and they are not to expect any deference or regard any longer than they are in a condition to pay for it. How many in a state of ease and affluence unnaturally suffer their parents to feel the want of the conveniences, and even the necessaries of life! There have not been wanting instances where the impious hand has been lift up to injure instead of defending; and would to God we could stop here, and suppose, with Solon, that it were impossible to proceed farther! Fatal experience has convinced us, either that we have made a very considerable progress in wickedness since those times, or that our heathen forefathers had a better opinion of human nature than it deserved. But surely the Lord will not forget to visit for these things: the mischief of these abandoned miscreants shall return on their own heads, and their violent dealing come down four-fold upon their own pates. Common experience, as well as history, will inform us, that those who have been disobedient and untoward

children, rarely become glad and happy parents: they experience the same treatment from their own offspring, and sometimes, as has been observed, with surprising and uncommon instances of conformity between the particular offence and the punishment; and if they reach, which rarely happens, to the hoary honours of grey hairs, they are worn with shame and disquiet, and at length brought down with sorrow to the grave.

On the contrary, the length of days which the great Law-giver expressly promises to such as honour their father and their mother, is the least blessing they have to expect. Their days are not only many in the land, which the Lord their God giveth them, but serene and happy; their wives are like the fruitful vine, and their children like olive branches round about their table. They often see the blessing extend to their children's children; and, having eat and drank to the full of the good things of this life, they retire, in a good old age, to sleep quietly with those fathers whom they loved and honoured, according to the commandment; and when they awake, they shall awake to the everlasting inheritance of those joys which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF HUSBANDS AND WIVES.

BY THE REV. GABRIEL TOWERSON, D.D.

IT being so rare for popular discourses to entreat of the duties of married persons, that it is almost become an absurdity to mention them, I may, perhaps, fall under the censure of indiscretion for going about to make them the subject of mine, though the design I am now upon do naturally lead me to it. But because I cannot give a satisfactory account of the nature of adultery, and much less of the due importance of that commandment which forbids it, without entreating of the laws of marriage which adultery is the violation of, and because, how nice soever men are now grown, and how fearful soever of incurring the censure of indiscretion, St. Paul made no difficulty of interlacing almost all his epistles with discourses of it ; lastly, because there is neither that fidelity between some married persons which the divine institution and their own covenants, nor that accord between others which so intimate a relation doth require, I hope it will not be looked upon by sober persons as any imprudence, if I make it the business of this discourse to demonstrate what is requisite to preserve it inviolable, after it is so contracted. In order whereunto, I will represent,

I. Such duties as are common to the married parties ; and after that, descend to

II. Those which are peculiar to each of them.

Now though what both the one and the other are be competently evident from those covenants into which the parties enter at the solemnization of matrimony between them, yet because it is not impossible some duties may be more obscurely expressed there than will be requisite to give each of them a due understanding of them ; and because those which are more clearly set down, will be looked upon as more forcible, if it can be made appear that they have the obligation of the divine command, as well as of their own contract, to bind them on them ; therefore, I think it but necessary to investigate them by the purport of the divine commands, as well as by the tenor of their own compacts.

I. To begin with those which are common to the married parties, because the most natural results of that intimate conjunction into which they enter. Where,

1. First, I shall represent the parties loving each other, as both their own compacts, and the divine commands bind them. For though love be most usually made the duty of the husband to the wife, as, on the other side, obedience and reverence that of the wife towards the husband, yet as it is evident from St. Paul's enjoining the aged women to teach the younger to love their husbands, that love is no less due from them than it is from the husband to them. So the ground which he elsewhere assigns for the husband's loving of the wife, infers equally the returning of it by her. For the love of the husband to the wife being founded by him in that unity, or identity rather, which marriage conciliates between the parties, and so on, if the wife be one with him as well as he with her, there must be the same tie of love upon her as there is upon the husband to her. Here only is the difference, that whereas the husband, by the perogative of his sex, hath no other tie than that of love, which is the reason why the duty of love is in a manner appropriated to him ; the wife, because subjected to the husband, is to temper hers with reverence and obedience. For which cause we hear so little of any love to be paid by her, and so much of reverence and obedience.

It being thus evident that love, how peculiar soever it may seem unto the man, is yet alike the duty of both, proceed we to enquire what is the due importance of it. Where first, no doubt can be made but that it implies an inward affection ; as because love, in propriety of speech, denotes the affections of the heart, so because all effect, without it, are but hypocrisy and dissimulation. As little doubt is to be made, secondly, but that that inward affection of love is to exert itself in suitable effects, partly because love is naturally operative, and partly because St. Paul, where he exhorts husbands to love their wives, proposeth Christ's love to the Church for the pattern of it, which, as it was not without an inward affection, so showed itself in effect, because (as the same St. Paul observes), prompting him to give himself for it. The only thing of difficulty in this matter is, what is the ground of that mutual love, and what effects it ought to manifest itself by.

As to the former of these, much need not be said, especially if we have an eye to the principal ground of it. The words of St. Paul in the place before-quoted, no less than those of the institution of marriage, showing the ground of the party's love to be no other than that unity into which the divine institution hath

conjoined them. Only as so much was necessary to be observed here, because the proper place for it ; so the rather to take them off from laying the main stress of their love upon their amiableness, or other qualities of those with whom they are so conjoined. For as though these, and other such like, are a just ground of love between them, yet they are neither the only, nor the principal ones ; so he who makes them such is in danger of overthrowing that love which God would have to be firm and stable ; because, however the word of God may endure for ever, yet beauty, and other such like qualities, perish, and come to nought, and consequently draw after them the destruction of that love which hath no other ground to stand upon. I say not the same of that affection which is between Christ and his Church, of which St. Paul tells us marriage was intended for a figure, because, though that be not the principal ground of love, yet it is a necessary and a lasting one. For inasmuch as marriage was intended to represent that affection and unity which is betwixt Christ and his Church, that affection and unity ought in reason to be an inducement to ours, as without which we shall but profane the other.

The grounds of our mutual love being thus declared, enquire we, in the next place, into the due effects of it ; which are, first, the doing of all things that may any way contribute to each other's contentment, as, on the other side, the avoiding of all things which may displease ; both the one and the other of which, as they are so easy to be understood, that it will be unnecessary to explain them ; so they are, for the most part, such, that it will be much better to leave them to the consciences of the parties to inform themselves in, than to give any distinct explication of. It may suffice here to say, first, that as marriage was intended for such a society as the parties that enter into are by nature most fitted for, so it cannot but be looked upon as a violation of marriage, and of that love which it involves, to refuse that society to each other. Again, forasmuch as all love, and particularly the conjugal one, excludes the doing of anything that may displease the party loved, it will follow that they who are entered into that state, are to avoid all unkind or contumelious words, all contemptuous and injurious actions, but more especially all such as may minister an occasion of suspicion to each other of their having a greater affection for a stranger.

Next to the contention of each other, subjoin we the seeking one another's profit as being a no less necessary effect of love, and of that union that is between the parties. For as love where it is, naturally seeks the good of those whom it makes the object of its affection ; so, by so much the more, by how much

the nearer they are to it ; but how much rather than when they are in a manner one with it. Whieh, as it is the case of the married couple, who, by the institution of the Almighty, are no more twain but one flesh : so, being so, it must be looked upon as unnatural not to have the same care for each other, not to seek each other's profit and advantage. Beeause, however, men may sometimes have little regard to stangers, yet (as the apostle argues in the place before-quoted) no man yet ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church. Which plae, as it is a convingeing argument of the love they ought to have for each other, and, whieh is more, of seeking each other's advantage ; so direets us withal to the means they are to make use of, in order to the procuring of it ; that is to say, providing for each other's welfare, while it is yet entire, by food, and raiment, and all other things that are necessary for their support, as when it is any way impaired by sickness or trouble of mind, endeavouring to restore it by the application of inward and outward remedies, by advice, and eomfort, and assistance. Both the one and the other of these, as they are the purport of those words by which St. Paul illustrates the effects of the husband's love ; so, being alike eommon to each, as both the union that is between them shows, and the aptitude that is in either to promote them. For though the eare of provision lies espeially upon the man as being best fitted for it by ability both of mind and body, yet as the woman oftentimes is in some measure fitted for it, and, consequently, under a proportionable obligation to intend it, so there is a provision within-doors whieh is her peculiar province, and without whieh the provision of the man will be of little or no avail, either for himself or her.

But because the married parties are spirit as well as flesh, and no provision can secure the welfare of that, but that whieh religion furnishes, therefore it may not be amiss to enquire whether that love which ought to be between them be not to extend itself also to the seeking of each other's spiritual welfare ; for though marriage, in its own nature, looks no further than a temporal one, as for the promotion whereof it was first ordained, yet as nothing hinders but it may be carried much higher by the precepts of religion, and particularly of that whieh we have the honour to profess, so that is so, we have not only the general commands of procuring each other's eternal welfare (and how much more then theirs who are so early conjoined to us?) but such as do more particularly direct the procuring of theirs who are united to us by the band of marriage. For wherefore should St. Paul direct the wife, if she understood not what she had learned in the public assemblies, to ask her husband at home

concerning it, but that (as Bishop Davenant well argues) it is the duty of the husband to direct his wife in spiritual as well as temporal matters ? Or the same St. Paul oblige “the believing wife to cohabit with an unbelieving husband,” upon the hopes of gaining him over to her religion, but that he supposes it to be the duty of the wife, so far as in her lies, to procure her husband’s spiritual welfare ? And indeed as it is scarcely possible for those who have any great love for each other, not to desire and endeavour each other’s welfare in that which most especially concerns them. So they who remember marriage to have been intended as a figure of that mystical union that is between Christ and his Church, will not think they have paid a just respect to that mystery which it adumbrates, unless they endeavour to their power to make the conversation of each other approach as near as may be to it.

Lastly, forasmuch as there is nothing more contrary to love, or to that union from which it results, than strife and contention between the married parties, it will follow that it is their duty as well as interest to prevent them what they may, or if they happen at any time to break out, to suppress them ; the former whereof will be done by avoiding all occasion of offence, the latter, by a mutual forgiving and forbearance where such offences do arise—which, whilst some persons have imprudently neglected, they have but helped to make themselves miserable, and make the yoke of marriage as uneasy to themselves as to those whom they designed to revenge themselves upon. It being not to be thought they should reap any advantage to themselves who either kindle or maintain a war within their own house and bowels.

2. To the duty of love subjoin we that of fidelity, which is another necessary result of that union which marriage conciliates—he or she no less violating that unity who bestow their affections upon a stranger, than they who deny it to the proper object of it. Upon which account, as adultery must needs be looked upon as highly criminal, because violating it in that particular for which it was especially ordained, so also, though in a lower degree, the frequenting the company of others more than their own consorts, or using more familiarity with them than the laws of decency and modesty do allow ; in fine, the spending upon others any considerable part of their estates, to the prejudice, or without the consent of the other party ; he who joined them so closely to one another as to make them one flesh, consequently forbidding all commerce with strangers, which either exceeds, or rivals, or prejudiceth that commerce which the society into which they enter obligeth the married persons to.

3. Thirdly. As love and fidelity to each other are the indispensable duties of the married parties, so also, though in a different measure, the giving each other honour, according as they expressly stipulate. For the evidencing whereof, we shall need only to instance in the deportment of the husband to the wife, because (as I shall afterward show) there cannot be the least doubt of honours being to be paid to the husband by her. Now that the husband is to give honour to his wife is evident from that of St. Peter (1 Pet. iii. 17), where he exhorts the husband not only to dwell with his wife according to knowledge, but to give honour to her as to the weaker vessel ; which words, as they are a convincing proof of that honour which we have affirmed to be due to her from her husband ; so, show the honour that is to be given unto her, because the honour of the weaker vessel to be such as is proper to that state in which God hath placed her under her husband. The purport whereof is, not that the husband should subject himself to her who is but in some respects his equal, and much less his superior, but that inasmuch as she is assumed into a copartnership with him, he should treat her, not as a servant, but a companion ; and not only so neither, but as the companion of such a person, and according to his own quality or dignity : that he should permit her (as in reason he ought) to bear herself as a mother over his family, and not either subject her to, or abridge her the exercise of her authority over it ; in fine, that he should permit her, whilst she lives, to partake of his worldly goods, and after her and his decease, to permit her children to succeed unto them. For though I know, even among us, there are other kind of bargains made, and such as do in truth make the woman rather a concubine than a wife, as shall hereafter be more at large declared—though I know also that there is in Germany a sort of marriage wherein the husband gives the wife the left hand instead of the right, that is to say, expressly stipulates with her not to take her as a wife of equal condition, by means of which (as Mylerus observes) neither hath she all the rights of the wife, neither do her children succeed either to the father's name, or arms, or full inheritance ; yet, as I cannot but look upon such matches amongst us as a contradiction *in adjecto*, because the husband in marriage endows her with all his worldly goods, so, upon all such, whether here or elsewhere, as contrary to the divine institution of marriage, and particularly to that honour which St. Peter requires men to exhibit to them. For how are they either one with their husbands, or in the esteem of their wives, which are set at so great a distance from them ?

I will conclude this part of my discourse with a duty, that is

indeed alike common with the former to each of the married parties, but which hath not themselves, but God for the object of it. And that is, that forasmuch as God is the author of marriage, they would, in respect to him whose institution it is, possess their vessels in sanctification and honour, as well among themselves as towards others; which they shall do, if to give themselves to fasting and prayer, they shall for a time defraud one another with consent, as at all times use that moderation in their enjoyments as may show them studious of more refined ones, and that reservedness and modesty in their outward deportment which may neither tempt others to any impurity, nor censure the divine institution because of them.

2. I have hitherto insisted upon such duties as are common to the married parties, and which, for that reason, it is to be hoped, will not be distasteful to either of them. It remains that I entreat of those that are peculiar to each of them, and where, if anywhere, I must expect a censure from my readers. But as that rarely happens to a teacher from the sober and the virtuous, where his own indiscreet managey thereof gives no occasion to it, so he must very much forget his own duty, and the dignity of his employment, who shall value anything of that nature, when coming from the ignorant and profane. So setting aside, therefore, any further discourse concerning that, I will betake myself to my task: and, first of all, to

1. Those duties which are peculiar to the husband. I have heretofore shown, and shall by the bye have occasion to confirm it, that God hath endued the husband with authority over the wife, and commanded her to pay obedience to it. But because it is not impossible men may arrogate to themselves a greater authority than ever God intended them, or exercise it more fully and with greater rigour than they ought: therefore, it may not not be amiss, in describing the peculiar duties of the husband, to show him what kind of authority he hath, how it is to be exercised, and about what.

For answer to which I say, first, that the authority of the husband over the wife is not coercive but directive, that is to say, an authority which privileges him to command, but not to constrain her to obedience. For being given by God to man as a companion and a helper, and, which is more, in such a degree as to become one with him, it is unreasonable to think that he should have such a power over her, as to constrain her to a compliance by force and violence. A forcible treatment degrading her from the condition of a mate, and ranking her among subjects or servants. Neither will it suffice to say, that so also will the laying of commands, because according to the usual

saying, “*Par in parem non habet potestatem*,” which is alike true as to commands and coercions. For beside that, by the divine institution, the man is privileged to rule over her, as you may see Genesis iii. 16. Beside that, in this case there is not a perfect parity, as the rule before spoken of shows. The power of command is not only not destructive of the conjugal society, but absolutely necessary to the maintaining of it. For inasmuch as the married parties may both entertain different apprehensions concerning such things as are to be done, and also take up different resolutions concerning them, if there were not a power of ruling somewhere, it would be in the power of either party to obstruct the common good of both. But as there is not the same necessity of a coercive power, partly because the husband hath the law of God to back his commands, and partly because not without a sufficient power from the laws of the place he lives in to be able to effect his own purposes, so it is perfectly inconsistent with that society and fellowship into which the wife is assumed by him. It may suffice the husband that he hath the power of commanding, and in case of refusal, that of reproof and admonition, as which those of far less authority are not excluded from; but other coercion than that, no law of God gives him, and is not therefore to be arrogated by him.

The authority of the husband over the wife being thus explained, and shown to consist in commands, admonition, and reproofs, proceed we to enquire how this authority is to be exercised, the second thing proposed to be discoursed of. For the resolution whereof, though I might again take my measures from that partnership into which we have said the wife to be admitted, yet I shall choose rather to shape my discourse by that love which the husband is everywhere commanded to show her who is so admitted by him. For love, where it is either finding or making persons equal, especially where there is not too great an imparity between the parties, it will follow that the commands or admonitions of the husband are not generally to be delivered in imperious terms, and such as savour more of authority than kindness. St. Paul having taught us, by his own behaviour toward Philemon, that though a man may have power to command, yet where that will serve a turn, for love’s sake he should rather entreat, and not so much constrain as invite them to a compliance. I say not the same, where she whom God hath commanded to obey, shows herself utterly averse from a compliance. For in such a case, to be too officious were to make himself contemptible, and not only so, but that authority which God hath vested in him. Only (as we learn from St. Paul elsewhere) even here also a mean is to be used, and though nothing

hinders him to express himself in terms suitable to his own authority, yet no law, either of God or man, allows him to be bitter against her.

The third and last particular comes now to be discoursed of, even about what the authority of a husband is to be conversant, which, if we may judge of by the obedience the wife is required to pay, appears to be everything, as you may see Eph. v. 24. But as the same apostle elsewhere, where he entreats of that very argument, adds by way of limitation, “as it is fit the Lord,” thereby manifestly restraining the authority of the husband to all such things as are within the bounds of our religion, so reason requires the limiting it to such things also as are suitable to that fellowship into which she is admitted. From whence, as it will follow that the husband ought not to impose upon her such things as are more proper for a servant, or vassal, than a wife; so also that he is generally to leave the administration of household affairs to her alone care and management; because, as I have often said, she is admitted into a copartnership with him, which cannot well be solved if that should be taken from her, and because both St. Paul, and the laws of nations, appropriate the guiding of the house to her, according to that known proverb which the Roman matrons were wont to use, when they were, brought home to their husband’s houses,* “Where you are a master I expect to be a mistress, and enjoy the privileges of such.”

2. Having thus shown the duty of the husband to the wife as to that authority wherewith he is invested over her, it remains that we enquire what is due from her to him, as well in respect of his authority, as her own necessary subjection to it. Now though that be easy enough to infer from the foregoing discourse, and may therefore seem to require the less pains in the investigating of it, yet I think it not amiss, if it were only to observe a due proportion between them, to be as particular in the declaration of it, as I was before in that of the authority and duty of the husband. In order whereunto I say,

1. That inasmuchi as God hath invested the man with authority over the wife, it must be looked upon as highly irreligious in her to be so far from submitting to it, as, on the contrary, to usurp authority over him. Such a behaviour bidding defiance to the order of God and nature, because not only thwarting, but perverting it; and accordingly, as St. Paul not only proscribes it as a thing unlawful, but moreover represents it as a thing not to be suffered, so he hath also given us there to understand, what is to be thought of women’s laying commands upon their husbands, of entertaining them with reproofs, or offering vio-

* “ Ubi tu Caius, ibi ego Caia.”

lence to them. For if (as he there discourses) it is not so much as lawful for them to take upon them to instruct their husbands, how much less may we suppose it to be to command or check them, or, in fine, to offer violence to them? The two former being more apparent marks of authority than instruction, the latter of so high a nature that it is not lawful from the man to the wife, though invested by God with authority over her. It may suffice the wife where the husband behaves himself otherwise than he ought, to expostulate with him in the most becoming terms—to exhort, entreat, and persuade him to an amendment. In fine, to endeavour it by the piety and winningness of her behaviour, and particularly by a meek and quiet spirit. For as other courses than such are not likely to prevail with men that understand themselves, so St. Peter not only represents it as the means they are to make use of to win those who obey not the word to yield obedience to it, but gives hopes withal, by affirming it to be, “in the sight of God, of great price”—that is, the most probable means to procure it.

2. Again; forasmuch as God hath not only invested the man with authority over the wife, but represented him as the head of her, even as Christ is the head of the Church, it will follow (as St. Paul infers) that she ought to reverence her husband, and express it both in her behaviour and language, even as Sarah declared hers to Abraham by calling him “lord.” But from hence we may collect what is to be thought of those reproachful titles, which women of haughty spirits do oftentimes bestow upon them; for if by the precept of the Scripture they are not to speak to their husbands without respect, how much less may we think it lawful for them to use such contumelious terms as are scarcely fit to be given to a slave?

3. Lastly, forasmuch as God hath not only invested the man with authority, but obliged the woman to yield obedience to it, it will follow, not only that she is under a necessity of obedience, but of such an obedience also as is proportionable to that authority wherewith we have said him to be invested. The result whereof is, that she is to obey him in all things that are not contrary to religion, or to that condition of life into which she is admitted by him. These three things only must be added to the former exceptions, as exceptions of those exceptions, or rather necessary explications of them.

1. That though the wife hath no tie upon her to comply with him in such things as are contrary to religion, yet she is to be directed by him in judging of religious matters; and where they are not manifestly contrary to the Scripture, to submit to and follow his advices. For as there is not a more proper notion of that headship which is attributed to the man than that which imports

a power of direction, so that that direction is to be understood with reference to religious matters also, St. Paul plainly shows, (1 Cor. xiv. 35), he there obliging the wife, if she doubted of the sense of any thing delivered in the public assemblies, to ask her husband at home, and if so, to take directions from him in doubtful cases; which course (as a learned man observes) hath this farther to recommend it, that “though, if she be deceived alone, she hath no excuse, because not attending to her instructor, yet if she should happen to be deceived with him, she hath much pity, and some degrees of warranty under protection of that humility and deference which she shows towards him who is by God appointed over her.”

2. Secondly, though it be true that the wife is not under any tie of obedience where the things commanded by the husband are more fit for a servant than a wife, yet as there may be a time (particularly that of sickness), wherein the husband and wife both may be obliged by turns to be a kind of servants to each other, so what is fit, or not fit for a wife to do, is at all times to be judged, not by the deportment of the most which in each sex are always the worst, and much less by the caprices of their own brain, but by the examples of godly matrons, as which are most likely to direct them best in judging of it.

3. Lastly, though it be true that the management of household affairs is the proper province of the wife, and therefore, no proper matter generally for the husband to interpose his commands in, yet as no man is obliged to be imposed upon as to his own particular, or discredited, or undone by her to whom he is appointed as a head, so, if there be any danger of either of these by her imprudent or wilful management of affairs, there is no doubt in such a case he hath authority to controul her, and consequently, she also a necessity of submitting to it.

Having thus shown at large the duties of married persons, as well those which are peculiar to each, as those which are common to them both, nothing remains for me to do but to exhort them to a performance, and particularly of such duties as are peculiar to each of them. For beside that by so doing, they shall each of them comply with the divine commands, and (because that is a natural consequent of the other) procure the peace of their own consciences—beside that they shall thereby consult the peace and welfare of themselves and families, which, for want of a just compliance, are oftentimes torn in pieces, and beggary and confusion introduced—the married parties have this farther inducement to it, that they shall thereby provide for their own reputation, which is a thing that prevails often where neither interest nor religion can. For what credit can it be to the husband to

domineer over his wife, who, as well by the weakness of her sex as by the divine command, is obliged to subject herself to him? Or what credit to the wife to detract her husband's just commands, or usurp authority over him, when she cannot do either without proclaiming herself to be proud and insolent, and her husband to be a fool for permitting it?—which last title, if such persons cannot with patience hear others affix unto their husbands because of that strait tie which is between them, let them see how they will absolve themselves in their own breasts, who, by their imperious carriage, give occasion to the reproach of both. On the other side, when man and wife perform their respective duties, and his will looks more like a desire than a command, and her actions like the result of his will than of her own—when the man avoids as much as may be the interesting himself in her affairs, and the wife not only intermeddles not with such as are proper to his cognizance, but endeavours to approve herself to him in the management of her own—lastly, when the man treats the wife as his associate, or rather as himself, and the wife demeans herself to him as her director and superior, then there is not only a happy compliance with the divine institution, and with one another, but a just foundation of universal applause, and all wise and good persons think themselves obliged to honour the man for knowing how to temper his authority so as to make it acceptable and pleasant, as the wife for being able, by the obligingness of her behaviour, to transform him into an adorer of her, and make him change his sovereignty into kindness and condescension.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF MASTERS AND SERVANTS.

BY THE REV. GABRIEL TOWERSON, D.D.

WHAT honour is due from us to those that have anything of dignity to command them, hath been already declared, together with the grounds upon which it stands. It remains only that we treat of the honour of such as are also in authority, and may command our obedience as well as respect; I do not mean by virtue of any public employment (for what honour is due to such hath been before sufficiently declared), but by virtue of some private dominion, such as is that of a lord of a manor over his tenants, or of a master of a family over his servants.

Of the former of these much need not be said, whether as to the necessity, or the kinds of honour that are to be paid. For holding their lands from them, upon condition of certain rents, services, and homages, to which they do, moreover, by promise and oath, oblige themselves, at their several admissions to them; the benefit they enjoy by them and their own compact shows the necessity of honouring them; as the latter, because particularly expressing them the kinds of honour they are to pay. In consideration whereof, as no man of conscience can pretend to withhold them, were it only for the oath of God, by which the payment thereof is bound upon them, so those who challenge this honour from them are in reason to afford them that protection, assistance, and redress, which the laws of the land, the custom of the place, or the nature of their dominion, doth require.

From this first dominion pass we to that which is more general; I mean, that of the master over his servants: where, first of all—

1. I shall show the duty of servants honouring their masters.
2. The grounds upon which the honour of them is built.
3. What kinds, and measure, and quality of honour, is due unto them.
4. And lastly, what is due from them again to their servants.

I. I begin with the first of these, even the duty of servants honouring their masters; concerning which, the Scriptures of

the New Testament speak much and often, as to that part of honour which consists in obedience and submission. But because, when I descend to show the kinds of honour they are to give them, there will be a necessity of producing those texts anew, I shall content myself at present with that general proof which St. Paul gives us in his first to Timothy, and with that which this commandment, if well considered, will be found to do. For, though the letter of it specify only the honour of parents, yet it sufficiently implies the honour of other superiors, and particularly that honour which is due from servants to their masters, there being certainly a far greater pre-eminence of a master over his servant than there is of a father over his child. But so that I may strengthen this inference with the doctrine of Christianity, St. Paul doth expressly enjoin, willing “as many servants as are under the yoke, to count their masters worthy of all honour.” (1 Tim. vi. 1).

II. The necessity of servants honouring their masters being thus evinced, both from St. Paul and the general reason of the commandment, my proposed method obligeth me to enquire into the grounds of it, which are different, according to the different sorts of servants: for, either they are such as become so—

1. By their own free consent; or,
2. Such as become servants by constraint.

The latter of these are again of three sorts, according to the different means whereby a man may come to have dominion. For, either he may acquire it,

1. By the means of conquest; or,
2. By sentence; or,
3. And lastly, by purchase from those who have either the one or the other title to their service.

If the question be concerning the first, that is to say, of such as become servants by conquest, so the ground of honouring their masters is the giving them their life, when it was in their power to have taken it away. For being by the law of nations privileged to take away the life of those which should be taken by them in the wars, it seemed but reasonable, and indeed is no other, that, if the conqueror give them their life, they should, for so great a benefit, dedicate that life unto his service. Whence it is, as Justinian observes, that servants among the Romans had the name of *Mancipia* and *Servi*, the former importing their being taken by the hand of the enemy, the latter, the saving of them by those that took them, when it was in their power to have destroyed them. In like manner, if the magistrate, when for any offence he might take away the malefactor's life, condemnus him to a perpetual slavery, that indulgence of his is a

sufficient ground to oblige the malefactor to submit his neck unto the yoke. The tie is much the same, though with the addition of a farther one, upon such servants as become so by purchase, for the conqueror and the magistrate transferring their title unto another, and, moreover, taking a valuable consideration for it, reason and equity would that he who is so passed over should look upon himself as obliged to serve the purchaser, because succeeding into their rights, and, moreover, paying a valuable consideration for that honour and service which he exacts.

From such servants as are made so by constraint pass we to those which are made so with their own free consent, such as are daysmen, menial servants, and apprentices, concerning whom it will be no hard matter to show that there is a just ground of giving honour to their masters, nor yet, what those grounds are; the two former having for the ground of their honour those wages and nourishment which they receive, the latter, moreover, that skill or craft which their masters profess, all of them the stipulation of their own consent and compact, by which that honour and service is bound the faster on them. For what can be more reasonable than the paying them honour and service, who give them a valuable consideration for it, especially when they do, moreover, oblige themselves thereto, and covenant for the paying of it? it being a known and undoubted maxim, that there can be no injury there, where that which is exacted is with the free consent of him that is to pay it.

3. Having thus shown the grounds of that honour which servants owe unto their masters, and thereby evinced the reasonableness as well as necessity thereof, nothing remains, on the part of servants, but to enquire what kinds of honour they are to pay, and in what measure and proportion. For the resolution whereof, we must recal the forementioned distinction of servants by constraint, and such as are made so by their own consent and compact. If the question be concerning the former, that is to say, of such as become servants by right of conquest, by the condemnation of them for some notorious wickedness, or by purchase; so, little doubt can be made, but all honour is due from them to their several masters, which they are in a capacity to pay. For beside that St. Paul, in the place before-quoted, commands such servants to think their masters worthy of all honour, it is no more than is due from them, for the benefit they enjoy from those to whom they are subjected; I speak not only as to their constant sustenance, but the granting them that life which it was in their power to have taken away. And though, since Christianity took place in the world such kind of servitude

or slavery hath been more rare, especially in such persons as are of the same profession with their masters, yet I think so general an abolition of it was neither founded upon any just reason, nor have proved much for the conveniency of the world. Not the former, because (as Busbequius well observes) neither can all men bear a liberty that is attended with poverty, neither are all men so fitted by nature as to know how to govern themselves, without the conduct and command of others, being herein not unlike to certain beasts, whose fierceness would be always to be dreaded unless they were restrained by bonds. Which supposed, what can be more reasonable, where a just cause precedes, than the introducing of such a servitude as we speak of, as by means of which the master may live by the servant's labour, and the servant, on the other side, not only be maintained by it, but be restrained from those exorbitances to which either his ignorance or the pravity of his nature may incline him? But neither hath so general an abolition of servitude been much for the conveniency of the world; for, as the same Busbequius observes, if it had still continu'd, neither would the wars nor the gallows take off so many men, which might otherwise be of great use unto the world, that profit which might arise from the use or sale of them being likely to make the conqueror less cruel, and the magistrate less severe in his executions. To say nothing at all, that through the fear of that, some men might be more effectually restrained from those exorbitances which the world labours under, a constant slavery being undoubtedly more terrible to the idle gallant than either a gibbet or an axe. Add hereunto (and more I shall not need to add), that St. Paul himself doth not only nowhere disallow this servitude, but commands those that are under it to think their masters worthy of all honour; such servants as are under the yoke being no other than bond slaves, as you may see if you compare that phrase with Lev. xxvi. 13, and Isa. ix. 4.

But because, at least in this corner of the world, there is but little of such kind of servitude, or because, when I come to entreat of the duties of masters to their servants, I shall have occasion to say somewhat of the measure of those servants' subjection and obedience; therefore, superseding any further consideration of it for the present, I will go on to show what kind, or measure, or quality of honour is due to their masters, who are servants not by constraint, but by consent and compact. For the resolution whereof, though much need not be said, because what kinds or measure of honour is due from them is, in a great measure, determinable by those compacts by which they become their servants; yet, because those compacts do some-

times run in more general terms, and because servants are generally backward enough in the apprehending of their duty, I think it not amiss to be a little more particular in describing the several portions of it. In order whereunto, the first thing I shall offer is, the showing respect to them in gesture and language; because, as that is the primary notion of that honour which servants are obliged to think their several masters worthy of, so, without that, much would be taken off from the readiness of that submission and obedience, which are the principal and undoubted parts of their duties, men being not over-forward to submit themselves to those whom they have not an honourable esteem of, nor to entertain such an esteem long, where they are suffered either to bear themselves as their master's fellows, or to talk to them as to their equals. From respect in gesture and language, pass we to obedience; concerning which duty the Scriptures speak much and often; witness, to omit others, Eph. vi. 5, and Col. iii. 22. In the former whereof, St. Paul commands servants to be "obedient unto them that are their masters according to the flesh;" in the latter, "to obey them in all things," and that, too, with such qualifications as are there subjoined. The only thing of difficulty is, what ought to be the measure of their obedience, and with what qualifications to be attended. And here, not to tell you concerning the former, that it ought to be in things lawful and possible, because to other than such there can be no obligation: that supposed, I shall affirm, first, that their obedience ought to extend to all those things that are expressly covenanted between their master and them, there being nothing more reasonable or necessary than to pay their masters that service which they expressly promise to afford them. But from hence it will follow, that there can be no pretence for withholding their obedience in the matters of that employment or trade for which they are more particularly hired; because, however other things may be set down in more general terms, these are always expressly covenanted by them. There is the same necessity, secondly, of yielding obedience in all those things which, though not particularly expressed in the agreement, yet are by law or custom imposed upon them, partly because of that obedience we all owe unto the law, and partly because their masters, stipulating with them in the general to be obedient to their commands, it is in reason to be understood of all such commands as either the law or custom privilege them to impose, it being but reasonable to suppose that to be understood which is not only too long to express, but is, by the generality of the world, presumed as due. But from hence it will follow, not only that servants are to obey their masters in

such things as relate to that employment for which they are more particularly covenanted with, but also that, if they be required, they are to tend upon them, and do other such-like offices about them, after the same manner that we find those servants in the Gospel, after they were come out of the field, obliged by their master to "make ready first from him, and gird themselves and serve him," before they sat down themselves (Luke xvii. 8). Which is the rather to be taken notice of, because ordinary servants now-a-days look upon their employment rather as an office than a service, and, consequently, do but in part give obedience to their master's commands. Thirdly, as servants are to yield obedience in such things as are expressly covenanted for, and in such as are by law or custom imposed upon them, so they are to do the like even where the matter of the command is harsh, provided it be not eminently such, the precept of St. Peter being—"that servants should be subject, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." (1 Peter ii. 18.) Which said, nothing remains to account for but the qualifications of that obedience which both nature and Scripture exact of them; which is, either, first, the doing it with singleness of heart, or, secondly, with a ready and cheerful mind; the former whereof excludes all eye-service, and such as studies rather to avoid the master's displeasure than to do him true and faithful service; the latter, all obeying with murmuring and repining. Both which vices, as they are plainly enough condemned by St. Paul (Col. iii. 22, 23), and the contrary qualifications enjoined, so the latter (as the same St. Paul observes) have this further reason to bind them upon servants, that that obedience which is required of them is imposed upon them by God and Christ, as well as by their earthly masters; which latter, however servants may think to put off with a deceitful or repining service, yet they cannot hope so to satisfy God, who both sees them when their masters do not, and requires nothing more than a willing and a cheerful mind. Lastly, as servants are to be obedient to their masters, so also to submit unto their censures, yea, such as are rather frowardly than justly inflicted, the command of St. Peter being, that servants should be so subject to the froward, as the reason he subjoins shows, even because, as he there goes on, that and that only "is thankworthy with God, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." (1 Peter ii. 18, 19.) This only would be added, that though servants are, by the command of God, to submit even to unjust censures, yet it ought to be understood, provided they be not often repeated, nor prove intolerable when they are; for in that case, though

the servant may not violently resist, yet there is no doubt he may endeavour to avoid them by making his appeal to the magistrate, to whom the redressing, even of servants' unjust sufferings, doth pertain. Whence it is, that by the rescript of Marcus Antoninus, even slaves had the privilege of flying to the temple or the statues of the prince, and the presidents of the provinces were commanded to take cognizance of their complaints, and deliver them from their masters' cruelties. But, as where the chastisement is neither intolerable nor often repeated, it cannot be thought reasonable, when St. Peter commands submission to the froward, for servants to oppose themselves; so, if they should be allowed to do so, it would introduce a greater confusion in families, than either the peace of them or of the State would be consistent with.

4. What honour is due from servants to their masters hath been at large declared, and thereby, so far as this particular is concerned, the main intendment of the commandment discharged; but because I have often said, that the commandment which is now before us was intended also to comprehend the duty of superiors toward inferiors, as well as of inferiors toward them, I think it not amiss to speak somewhat of the duty of masters toward their servants, and the rather, because oftentimes they stand as much in need of an admonition as the other. In order whereunto, following the division before laid down, I will consider the duties of masters toward their slaves, and then of their duties toward such as, though their servants, yet are so in a more ingenious way.

Now, though the authority of masters over slaves be undoubtedly much greater than that over other servants, though anciently, as Justinian tells us, they had the power of life and death, and were not accountable for it, though they put them to death unjustly, yet, as the Roman laws set bounds to that exorbitant power of theirs, and our own hath yet more retrenched it, so, if we consult the laws of nature and Christianity, we shall find there is more owing from them unto their slaves than is ordinarily thought fit to be paid. Of this nature is, first, furnishing them with food and raiment, in such a proportion as may suffice the necessities of nature, this being absolutely necessary to enable them to the performance of that service and labour which they exact. Of the same nature is, secondly, the imposing such tasks upon them as is not above their strength to perform, this being no more than common humanity requires, of which slaves are equally partakers with ourselves. But such also it is, thirdly, not to punish them above the demerit of their crime, nor above what their strength will bear, justice requiring

that the punishment do not exceed the proportion of the offence, and common humanity, that it pass not the bounds of their natural abilities. In fine, for so St. Paul plainly intimates, where he commands masters "to give unto their servants that which is just and equal," their commands and punishments ought to extend no further than the laws of the place give leave, or equity and Christian charity permit, which, to be sure, will not only include all cruelty and injustice toward them, but impose a necessity upon the master of showing such compassion to them as their weakness or necessities may at any time require. In the meantime, though I noway doubt but masters are to give unto their slaves that which is just and equal, and consequently, to abstain from all cruelty, either in their commands or censures, yet I think it necessary for them to submit both to the one and the other, where the burthen which is imposed is not above the proportion of their strength, partly, because St. Peter commands subjection to the froward and difficult, and partly because that they have so much as their life is, owing either to the mercy of their present masters, or of those from whom they were purchased.

From the duties of masters to their slaves pass we to the duties of the same to their servants, such, I mean, as are so in a more ingenuous way. Where, first of all, I shall make no difficulty to affirm, as I suppose, neither will any man to grant, that all those things are undoubtedly owing to servants, which are from a master to his slave, the condition of servants being much better than that of slaves, and therefore, to be sure, not to require less of their masters than the other. As little difficulty can be made, that all that is owing to them from their masters, which, at the entrance upon their service, they do expressly covenant to afford them, a promise, even where there is no other obligation, making the party promising a debtor; and how much more, then, where there is a valuable consideration to engage him? But from hence it will follow, first, where there is any such thing covenanted, that they are to give them the promised reward or wages, and that, too, at or near the time wherein they become due to them; he paying less than he ought who pays not at or near the time, because depriving the party to whom he owes it of that use and advantage which he might, and which, because it is his own, it is fit he should receive by it. It will follow, secondly, where that is a part of the contract, that masters carefully and faithfully teach their servants that trade, for the learning whereof they become servants to them; which is the rather to be observed, because it is oftentimes through slothfulness omitted, or basely and invidi-

ously concealed, at least as to the chiefest mysteries thereof, as if a contract could be satisfied by paying one half of the thing contracted for, and it may be, too, the less considerable one. I observe, thirdly, that in such servants as are by contract to receive their whole maintenance from their masters, a regard is to be had, not only of what necessity, but what the condition of that service into which they are assumed, requires. For by how much the more ingenuous the service is, so much the more free in reason ought to be the entertainment of those that are in it; especially when, as it mostly happens, paying accordingly to their masters for it. Whence it is, that no man of reason doubts but that the apprentice of a merchant, or other such more liberal profession, should be treated in a better fashion than one of a man of a more inferior one, or an ordinary serving man to the same. I observe, fourthly, that as care is to be taken, on the one hand, that they afflict not their servants with immoderate labours or punishments, so also, on the other hand, that they suffer them not to be idle, nor be sparing of just chastisements, when they deserve them, the omission of that not only proving the bane of their servants, but being a falsification of that trust which is reposed in them by their servants' parents, and an injury to the commonwealth, which, by their slothfulness or cowardice, is like to have so much the worse subjects. Fifthly, and lastly (more than which I shall not need to say, unless it be to exhort them to the practice of what they are thus bound to), it is incumbent upon all masters of families to restrain their servants from all vicious courses, and both prompt and oblige them to the practice of religious duties, not indeed by any direct obligation upon them from their authority, which reacheth rather to temporal than spiritual matters (whence it is that they are called masters according to the flesh), but by virtue of that great law of Christianity, which commands men as much as in them lies to promote the business of religion, which lying more in masters' powers than in other men's, by means of that authority they have over them, there doth from thence arise an obligation upon them to promote religion by their commands in all those which are subjected to their dominion. And indeed, as that which is honest will very rarely be found to be separate from profitable, if men would estimate the advantageousness of a thing by that which is most certainly and lastingly so, so there cannot be a more compendious way to promote our interest in the world, than by endeavouring, as much as in us lies, to make those religious whom we employ; because, as what such do is most faithfully and diligently done, so it is most likely to be prospered by the Divine Providence, from whom, as all other gifts, so this world's wealth will be found to come.

Having entreated at large in several discourses of the duty here enjoined, as well that which we owe to our civil and spiritual parents, together with all other kinds of superiors, as that which we owe unto our natural ones, it remains that we proceed to the promise wherewith it is euforced, of the prolongation of our days. For though the words wherein it is expressed look rather like a motive drawn from the consequents of our honour, than a promise of what God will bestow upon it, yet, as that lawgiver who proposeth anything under the notion of a motive must, if he act like a lawgiver, both represent that which is advantageous, and moreover, if the thing depend upon his will, an assurance of his own readiness to contribute towards it, which is the very formality of a promise; so that which God proposeth under that notion was intended as a promise, St. Paul gives us to understand (Eph. vi. 2). He there styleth this commandment “a commandment with a promise;” and the first of that nature, meaning thereby, the first of the decalogue, to which there was any express and special one. Taking it, therefore, for granted, that the words now before us have the nature of a promise to the due observers of this commandment, I will make it my business to enquire—

- I. What is the due importance of it, and
- II. Whether or no, and how far it appertains to us Christians upon the performance of the duty enjoined.
- III. Whether, and in what proportion, it belongs to the several duties therein contained.

- I. Now there are three things, within the resolution whereof the answer to the first of these will be comprehended.
 - 1 What the blessing here promised is.
 - 2 From whom it is to be expected. And
Whether it implies anything of a curse to the violators of the commandment.
 1. What the blessing promised is we shall not be long to seek, because so particularly expressed in this place, and in the parallel one in Deuteronomy v. 16, it being evident from them both that a long life is promised; from that of Deuteronomy that that life shall be happy as well as long; and from both again, that that long and happy life should be spent in their own country, and particularly in the Land of Canaan, that being the land promised by God unto the Israelites, and to which this promise, and, in a manner, all the promises in the Old Testament, do refer.
 2. From the blessing promised pass we to the persons from whom we are to expect it, which is, no doubt, first and chiefly God, both the commandment and the promise being perfectly

his, and therefore the completion of the latter to be expected from him. But because, even in those things of which God is the first and principal author, there are other less principal and subordinate causes; and because, though our translation and others read only “that thy days may be long, or be prolonged,” in the meantime taking no notice of the means by which it is to be conveyed; yet the Hebrew, which is in reason to give measure to them all, reads—“that they, even thy father and mother, may prolong them;” therefore I think it but reasonable to collect from thence, that that long and happy life is next, under God, to be expected from our parents, partly by means of that sustenance and encouragement which our honour will invite them to afford us, but more especially (because “every good and perfect gift cometh from above”) by their intercession to God for us, from whom they receive such honour. For though (as Grotius hath observed) it be not unusual for verbs of an active form to be taken in a passive or reciprocal sense, in which sense both the Septuagint and most other translators understood the Hebrew verb here; yet, inasmuch as it is certain from the Scriptures, and particularly from the story of Jacob and Esau, that the blessing of the child depended much upon the prayers of the father, inasmuch as that wise author of the book of Ecclesiasticus represents it as a known truth that “the father’s blessing establisheth the houses of children, but the curse of the mother rooteth out foundations.” I think it no way improper to understand the Hebrew in its literal sense, and upon that account, though in a secondary sense, to ascribe the prolongation of children’s days to the blessing or devout prayers of their parents. But be there sufficient ground or not, in this particular place, for the influence the parents’ prayers may have upon the happiness of the child, and particularly upon his length of days, yet as it is not without ground, if we take the practice of the patriarchs for one, and the observation both of Jews and Gentiles, for it wants not that, the force whereof will be more hard to resist, I mean the astipulation of reason, the prayers of parents for their obedient children being not only, through the affection from which they proceed, likely to be more than ordinarily intense, and therefore so much the more likely to prevail; but the clearest attestations that can be of that respectful behaviour of the child, to which a long and happy life is promised. Which attestations, however, God stands in no need of, and much less can the want of them be thought to be able to divert him from his purposes, yet may very well be presumed, when concurring with them, to quicken the execution of them, and press him to perform what he himself hath promised. Upon

which account, I cannot but wonder that children should now be taught not to beg those prayers which have such visible advantages, especially when the so doing hath had the general approbation of Christendom, and is, moreover, no contemptible testimony of that honour which they are to pay, the author to the Hebrews having told us that without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better, and consequently, that the begging of a father's blessing is a testimony of honour, because implying a confession of his superiority from whom they desire it.

3. The only thing to be accounted for, is, whether the promise annexed to this commandment implies anything of a curse to the violators of it. Which, that it doth, will evidently appear, if we mean no other by a curse than the shortening of those children's lives that disobey. For, as that naturally follows from the sole withdrawing the influence of the divine providence; so that God will withdraw that influence from disobedient children, needs no other proof, than that he hath particularly promised to continue it to obedient ones. For, what great encouragement could it be to honour our parents, to have the promise of that which those who do not honour them may be alike partakers of with ourselves? Neither will it suffice to say (as perhaps it may be) that the certainty which a promise inferreth, makes it reasonable to perform that to which it is annexed, rather than run the hazard of failing of it. For, how reasonable soever it may be to prefer a certainty before an uncertainty, where no other considerations intervene, yet is it not to such a degree as to be likely to prevail where there are any present temptations to the contrary; experience showing it to be a hard matter to resist such, even where there is an assurance of our loss. And how much more hard then (that I say not, the weakness of human nature considered, impossible), where there is a possibility of avoiding it? To all which, if we add the many expressions of God's displeasure against the violators of his laws, and particularly of that law which is now before us; so, no doubt can remain, but that at the same time God promiseth a long and happy life to the dutiful, he meant the contrary to disrespectful and disobedient children. For, how can we think otherwise, when there is a command to the magistrate to put him to death who curseth his father or mother? (Exod. xxi. 17); and the people (Deut. xxvii. 16) are taught to invoke the curse of God upon them that set light either by the one or the other?

II. The second question follows, to wit, Whether or no, and how far the promise that now is before us, appertains to us Christians? That it does appertain to us, much need not be said to show, because I have already prevented myself in that

argument.* It may suffice here to say, that, as it is reasonable enough to believe the promise doth, because that precept to which it is annexed is bound upon us by our blessed Saviour; so it is no less reasonable to believe so, because St. Paul, where he inculcates the precept, forgets not to add, that it is a commandment with a promise, and the first. For, what would it have signified to Christians, to have told them of its being a commandment with a promise, if that promise which belongs to it had been none of their concernment? Taking it, therefore, for granted, or rather as sufficiently proved, that the promise now before us appertains to us, we will proceed to enquire (as in which the main difficulty lies), whether it appertains to us in the same manner and measure it did unto the Jews; and if not, in what?

That it appertains not to us in the same manner and measure, is evident, first, from hence, that it particularly refers to the Land of Canaan; the promise being not only of a long and happy life, but of a long and happy life in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee; which we know to have been the Land of Canaan. Whence it is that the Septuagint, which oftentimes act the part rather of paraphrasts than strict translators, add to the name of Land, the title of *Good*; which we know, from Deut. viii. 7, to have been the particular elogie of the Land of Canaan. Now, forasmuch as the Land of Canaan was particularly promised to the Jews; forasmuch as it doth not appear that it was ever intended for Christians, nor was capable of containing the thousandth part of those who have or do give obedience to this commandment; it follows, that so far at least we have no concernment in the promise, and must therefore look out for other ways of the completion of it. But so St. Paul gives us plainly enough to understand, in the place before quoted out of the Ephesians. That apostle, though he represent the promise, yet leaving out that clause of it, “which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” But neither is it less evident, but that, abstracting from the Land of Canaan, the Jews to whom it was first made, had a far greater title to it, if it be strictly and literally understood: partly because those earthly promises which were made unto the Jews, were not clogged with those exceptions which we find those of the New Testament to be, and partly because they are represented by the writers of it, and particularly by St. Paul, as the shadows of those things to come, which the Gospel exhibited. Which reason alone, if well considered, will be found to make a great difference between

* See the “Discourse of the Measures whereby we are to proceed in the interpretation of the Decalogue.”

the times of the law and the Gospel. For the substance being come, it was but reasonable to think the shadow was to disappear, or, at least, not so to prevail as it did before the appearing of it. All, therefore, that remains to enquire is, in what manner and measure this and other such promises are to be construed to appertain to us, and what kind of completion we are to expect. Where, first, no doubt can be made that this and other such-like promises appertain to us in the mystery or substance. For the Gospel proposing to exhibit that of which the law was a type or shadow, those temporal promises which the law proposed must, consequently, be supposed to be fulfilled in the mystery or substance to all those which are under its economy; which, by the way, will not only confirm the truth of those promises belonging to us, but moreover, take off from those discontents we are apt to conceive upon the difference there is often between us and the Jews, as to temporal promises. The former, because the main intendment of all symbolical things, is the mystery which is represented under them; the latter, because exhibiting a more substantial good, though less apparent, than that which the law doth. For what just ground of complaint can there be, if the Gospel, though it provide not alike for our temporal welfare, yet provides much more for our spiritual one, and exhibits the substance of that of which the other had but the shadow? which said, nothing remains to do but to point out the mystery or substance of those earthly promises, which were by God in this commandment made to the honourers of their parents. But such is, first, heaven, in respect of that land which was to be the seat of their life, who among the Jews were due observers of this commandment, the author to the Hebrews not only styling it "a better and a heavenly country," in respect of the land of promise, but affirming moreover, that Abraham and Sarah looked through that land of promise to the heavenly country, and set up their rest in it; and in that city which God hath there prepared, which shows, that this heavenly country was figured in the land of promise, and consequently to be bestowed upon all such, under the Gospel, who should show themselves faithful observers of this commandment. The mystery will be yet more easy to be discovered, as to the residue of that promise which is here made to the religious honourers of their parents. For as, in order to that, nothing more can be necessary than to instance in such evangelical blessings as bear a perfect resemblance to the promised ones (an antitype being nothing else, either in the literal or Christian sense, than that which bears the same signatures with its type), so it will be no hard matter to point out

such of the evangelical blessings as do exactly accord with those which the law promised. For as that heavenly country which the Gospel promiseth hath not only the name of *Πατρίς*, or *Patria*, but our *Πολιτευμα*, or *citizenship*, affirmed to be there (Phil. iii. 20), because (as is elsewhere affirmed) that new birth which we have is from thence, and our original is not earthly, but heavenly ; so, correspondently to that long and happy life which the law proposeth, we have the promise of a life which doth infinitely surpass it in both, because devoid of anything which may interrupt our happiness ; and, beside that, not only simply long, but of such a duration as shall never have an end.

From the blessings typified by earthly promises, pass we to those earthly ones themselves ; and enquire whether or no, and how far they appertain to us Christians. For the resolution of the former whereof, we shall not be long to seek, because so distinctly stated by St. Paul ; he expressly affirming (1 Tim. iv. 8), that “godliness hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” The only thing of difficulty is, in what measure they belong to us ; which accordingly I come now to resolve. In order whereunto, the first thing I shall offer, is, that however the Jews might expect a perfect completion of them upon the performance of their duty, yet the like is not to be expected by us, as being proposed with an exception of persecution : our Saviour, where he makes the largest promise of things of that nature, yet forgetting not to add that allay to it. It is in Mark x. 29, 30 : “ And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that latli left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions ; and in the world to come, eternal life.” From which place, as it is manifest that a Christian may be sometime obliged to part with all earthly blessings ; so, that though he may hope to retrieve them with advantage, yet not without persecutions for the sake of that religion which he professeth. But beside that, what promises soever there may be of earthly happiness, yet it is not to be expected we should enjoy an uninterrupted one ; so neither any portion of it, any farther than may be subservient to our spiritual and eternal one, which is that which the Gospel chiefly promiseth. For, as otherwise earthly blessings should be rather an infelicity than a happiness, and therefore not to be looked for from him who professeth a more than ordinary kindness for us ; so being less principally intended by the Gospel, which is said to be built upon better promises, they are in reason to give place, where

they cannot be performed without entrenching upon the completion of those more principal and better ones. Lastly, as whatsoever earthly happiness may be thought to belong to us, yet it is of necessity to be understood with subserviency to our spiritual welfare ; so also to the glory of God and of his Gospel, which may be sometime much more promoted by our unhappiness. Upon which account, I conceive, it was that in the times near to our Saviour and his apostles, the most faithful disciples of our Lord did not only meet with little of earthly happiness, but were moreover beyond measure persecuted and destroyed ; God Almighty, by their exemplary patience and humility, giving the heathen to understand how admirable a religion they had espoused. But, as where the glory of God, or our own eternal welfare, is consistent with it, I see not how we can avoid the thinking of earthly promises to be our portion, when St. Paul hath so distinctly affirmed it ; so I cannot forbear to say that the want of earthly happiness is in a great measure imputable to our neglect of that piety to which it is even now promised : partly because I see the generality of Christians falling short of that piety which they profess, and partly because of that ill use which they generally make of that plenty and prosperity which God often heaps upon them. Upon which account there is a necessity upon God, if he will provide for our eternal welfare, to withdraw those earthly blessings, which otherwise we might have quietly enjoyed.

III. The third question follows, to wit—Whether or no, and in what proportion, the promise of a long and happy life belongs to the observers of the several duties of this commandment. That it belongs to all much need not be said to prove, after what hath been said to show their several concernments in the precept of honour ; for, it appearing from the former discourses, that the commandment is to be extended as well to the honour of our civil and spiritual parents, together with all other superiors, as to the honour of our natural ones ; the promise which is annexed to it is in reason to be extended to all the observers of it, in their several measures and proportions. The only thing of difficulty is, what those measures and proportions are, which yet will not cost either much time or pains to void. For as the promise is in reason to be thought principally and especially to belong to the honourers of their natural parents, partly because the honour of our natural parents is the only thing expressed, and partly because that tie which they have upon us approacheth nearest to that whereby the honour of God is bound upon us, so the same reason obligeth us to think it to belong more or less to the honourers of other superiors, as

those superiors approach nearer to or are farther removed from our natural parents. Upon which account, the promise of a long and happy life must be thought to belong more to the honourers of our civil and spiritual parents than to those of other superiors; as again, more to the honourers of our civil than spiritual ones, because, though our spiritual parents give us a much better being than any of the former, yet our civil ones have a greater interest in our temporal being, and consequently, the honour of them more likely to partake of the promise of earthly happiness, as being more commensurate to it.

IV One only question remains of those before proposed, with the resolution whereof I will put an end both to this argument and the commandment, and that is, what appearance there is of the literal performance of that promise which is here made to the honour of our superiors. For my more orderly solution of which, I will instance, first, in the honour of our natural parents, because the promise of a long and happy life is expressly annexed to it. Now, though it be not to be doubted but even good children have been sometime unfortunate, and have found their days either few or evil, yet, that generally it hath happened otherwise, we have the experience of the world to attest, as well of that part of it which was most removed from the true religion, as of that which had the clearest sense of it. Witness, for the former, those sentences of the Greeks remembered by Grotius, in his notes upon the second verse of the sixth to the Ephesians.

Ικανῶς βιώσεις γηροβοσκῶν τας γονεῖς.

“Thou shalt live long enough, if thou nourish thy parents in their old age;” and

“Ελπίζε τιμην τας γονεῖς πράξειν καλῶς.

“Assure thyself, that it shall be well with thee, if thou honour thy natural parents;” than which, what could be said more agreeably to the commandment, though, for aught appears, they had nothing but their own experience to prompt them to the affirmation of it? The same is to be said for the people of the Jews, among whom the same prosperity of obedient children was observed; witness the saying before remembered, out of Ecclesiasticus, with others that precede and follow it—“For the blessing of the father establisheth the houses of children, and the curse of the mother rooteth out foundations.” And though, among Christians, there is not the like certainty to be expected, because our religion leads us to promises of a higher nature, yet I doubt not but they who either have or shall observe the world, may find instances enough to justify the generality of the com-

pletion of the long and happy life of obedient children; as, on the other side, of the misfortunes and short-livedness of the disobedient and unnatural: according to that ancient observation of Homer, concerning Simoisius, in the fourth book of his Iliads—

*εθὸς τεκεῦσι
Θρεπτὰ φίλοις ἀπέδωκε, μιννυθαδίος δὲ οἱ ἀιών.*

“ He did not afford sustenance to his parents, and therefore he had but a short life.”

From the honourers of natural parents, pass we to the honourers of civil and religious ones, and all such as are in dignity and authority; for whom that God Almighty is not without thoughts of kindness, even as to the present life, may appear from hence that he hath so constituted the world that men cannot reasonably expect either a long or happy life without giving honour to them. Disrespect of superiors not only introducing confusion and sedition, from whence naturally arise wars, and all the mischiefs that attend them. But obliging superiors, for their own safety, and that of the commonwealth, to cut those off which shall be found to withdraw obedience from them. And though it sometime happen that the peaceable and obedient meet with a fate no way answerable to their merit; yet as, generally speaking, they are more likely to be successful than turbulent and seditious men; so, where they are not, they have that conscience of their own goodness to support them, and the certain expectation of a reward in another world: that being a blessing which, as no violence of men can obstruct, so God hath, without any exceptions, obliged himself to bestow.

THE RELATIVE DUTIES WHICH ARE INDETERMINATE.

BY THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON WILLIAM PALEY, D.D.

I USE the term charity neither in the common sense of bounty to the poor, nor in St. Paul's sense of benevolence to all mankind ; but I apply it at present in a sense more commodious to my purpose, to signify the promoting the happiness of our inferiors.

Charity, in this sense, I take to be the principal province of virtue and religion : for, whilst worldly prudence will direct our behaviour towards our superiors, and politeness towards our equals, there is little beside the consideration of duty, or an habitual humanity which comes in the place of consideration, to produce a proper conduct towards those who are beneath us, and dependent upon us.

There are three principal methods of promoting the happiness of our inferiors.

1. By the treatment of our domestics and dependents.
2. By professional assistance.
3. By pecuniary bounty.

THE TREATMENT OF OUR DOMESTICS AND DEPENDENTS.

A party of friends setting out together upon a journey, soon find it to be the best for all sides, that while they are upon the road, one of the company should wait upon the rest ; another ride forward to seek out lodging and entertainment ; a third carry the portmanteau ; a fourth take charge of the horses ; a fifth bear the purse, conduct and direct the route ; not forgetting, however, that, as they were equal and independent when they set out, so they are all to return to a level again at their journey's end. The same regard and respect ; the same forbearance, lenity, and reserve, in using their service ; the same mildness in delivering commands ; the same study to make their journey comfortable and pleasant, which he whose lot it was to direct the rest, would in common decency think himself bound to observe towards them, ought we to show to those who, in the casting of the parts of human society, happen to be placed within our power, or to depend upon us.

Another reflection of a like tendency with the former is, that our obligation to them is much greater than theirs to us. It is a mistake to suppose that the rich man maintains his servants,

tradesmen, tenants, and labourers : the truth is, they maintain him. It is their industry which supplies his table, furnishes his wardrobe, builds his houses, adorns his equipage, provides his amusements. It is not the estate, but the labour employed upon it, that pays his rent. All that he does, is to distribute what others produce ; which is the least part of the business.

Nor do I perceive any foundation for an opinion which is often handed round in genteel company, that good usage is thrown away upon low and ordinary minds ; that they are insensible of kindness, and incapable of gratitude. If by "low and ordinary minds" are meant the minds of men in low and ordinary stations, they seem to be affected by benefits in the same way that all others are, and to be no less ready to requite them ; and it would be a very unaccountable law of nature if it were otherwise.

Whatever uneasiness we occasion to our domestics, which neither promotes our service nor answers the just ends of punishment, is manifestly wrong ; were it only upon the general principle of diminishing the sum of human happiness.

By which rule we are forbidden,

1. To enjoin unnecessary labour or confinement from the mere love and wantonness of domination.
2. To insult our servants by harsh, scornful, or opprobrious language.
3. To refuse them any harmless pleasures :

And, by the same principle, are also forbidden causeless or immoderate anger, habitual peevishness, and groundless suspicion.

SLAVERY.

The prohibitions of the last chapter extend to the treatment of slaves, being founded upon a principle independent of the contract between masters and servants.

I define slavery to be "an obligation to labour for the benefit of the master, without the contract or consent of the servant."

This obligation may arise, consistently with the law of nature, from three causes :—

1. From crimes.
2. From captivity.
3. From debt.

In the first case, the continuance of the slavery, as of any other punishment, ought to be proportioned to the crime ; in the second and third cases, it ought to cease, as soon as the demand of the injured nation, or private creditor, is satisfied.

The slave trade upon the coast of Africa is not excused by these principles. When slaves in that country are brought to market, no questions, I believe, are asked about the origin or justice of the vendor's title. It may be presumed, therefore, that this title is not always, if it be ever, founded in any of the causes above assigned.

But defect of right in the first purchase is the least crime with which this traffic is chargeable. The natives are excited to war and mutual depradation, for the sake of supplying their contracts, or furnishing the market with slaves. With this the wickedness begins. The slaves, torn away from parents, wives, children, from their friends and companions, their fields and flocks, their home and country, are transported to the European settlements in America, with no other accommodation on ship-board than what is provided for brutes. This is the second stage of cruelty ; from which the miserable exiles are delivered, only to be placed, and that for life, in subjection to a dominion and system of laws, the most merciless and tyrannical that ever were tolerated upon the face of the earth ; and from all that can be learned by the accounts of the people upon the spot, the inordinate authority which the plantation laws confer upon the slaveholder is exercised, by the English slaveholder especially, with rigour and brutality.

But necessity is pretended—the name under which every enormity is attempted to be justified. And, after all, what is the necessity ? It has never been proved that the land could not be cultivated there, as it is here, by hired servants. It is said that it could not be cultivated with quite the same conveniency and cheapness as by the labour of slaves ; by which means, a pound of sugar, which the planter now sells for sixpence, could not be afforded under sixpence-halfpenny ;—and this is the necessity.

The great revolution that has taken place in the Western world may probably conduce (and who knows but that it was designed?) to accelerate the fall of this abominable tyranny ; and now that this contest, and the passions which attend it, are no more, there may succeed perhaps a season for reflecting, whether a legislature which had so long lent its assistance to the support of an institution replete with human misery, was fit to be trusted with an empire the most extensive that ever obtained in any age or quarter of the world.

Slavery was a part of the civil constitution of most countries when Christianity appeared ; yet no passage is to be found in the Christian Scriptures by which it is condemned or prohibited. This it true ; for Christianity, soliciting admission into all nations of the world, abstained, as behoved it, from intermeddling with the civil institutions of any. But does it follow, from the silence of Scripture concerning them, that all the civil institutions which then prevailed were right ? or that the bad should not be exchanged for better ?

Besides this, the discharging of slaves from all obligation to obey their masters, which is the consequence of pronouncing

slavery to be unlawful, would have had no better effect than to let loose one-half of mankind upon the other. Slaves would have been tempted to embrace a religion which asserted their right to freedom ; matters would hardly have been persuaded to consent to claims founded upon such authority ; the most calamitous of all contests, a *bellum servile*, might probably have ensued, to the reproach, if not the extinction, of the Christian name.

The truth is, the emancipation of slaves should be gradual, and be carried on by provisions of law, and under the protection of civil government. Christianity can only operate as an alternative. By the mild diffusion of its light and influence, the minds of men are insensibly prepared to perceive and correct the enormities which folly, or wickedness, or accident, have introduced into their public establishments. In this way the Greek and Roman slavery, and since these, the feudal tyranny declined before it. And we trust that, as the knowledge and authority of the same religion advance in the world, they will banish what remains of this odious institution.

PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE.

This kind of beneficence is chiefly to be expected from members of the legislature, magistrates, medical, legal, and sacerdotal professions.

1. The care of the poor ought to be the principal object of all laws ; for this plain reason, that the rich are able to take care of themselves.

Much has been, and more might be, done by the laws of this country, towards the relief of the impotent, and the protection and encouragement of the industrious poor. Whoever applies himself to collect observations upon the state and operation of the poor laws, and to contrive remedies for the imperfections and abuses which he observes, and digests these remedies into acts of Parliament, and conducts them, by argument or influence, through the two branches of the legislature, or communicates his ideas to those who are more likely to carry them into effect, deserves well of a class of the community so numerous, that their happiness forms a principal part of the whole. The study and activity thus employed is charity, in the most meritorious sense of the word.

2. The application of parochial relief is entrusted, in the first instance, to overseers and contractors, who have an interest in opposition to that of the poor, inasmuch as whatever they allow them comes in part out of their own pocket. For this reason, the law has deposited with justices of the peace a power of superintendence and control ; and the judicious interposition of

this power is a most useful exertion of charity, and oftentimes within the ability of those who have no other way of serving their generation. A country gentleman of very moderate education, and who has little to spare from his fortune, by learning so much of the poor law as is to be found in Dr. Burn's Justice, and by furnishing himself with a knowledge of the prices of labour and provision, so as to be able to estimate the exigencies of a family, and what is to be expected from their industry, may, in this way, place out the one talent committed to him to great account.

3. Of all private professions, that of medicine puts it in a man's power to do the most good at the least expense. Health, which is precious to all, is to the poor invaluable: and their complaints, as agues, rheumatisms, &c., are often such as yield to medicine. And with respect to the expense, drugs at first hand cost little, and advice costs nothing, where it is only bestowed upon those who could not afford to pay for it.

4. The rights of the poor are not so important or intricate as their contentions are violent and ruinous. A lawyer or attorney of tolerable knowledge in his profession, has commonly judgment enough to adjust these disputes, with all the effect, and without the expense of a law-suit; and he may be said to give a poor man twenty pounds, who prevents his throwing it away upon law. A legal man, whether of the profession or not, who, together with a spirit of conciliation, possesses the confidence of his neighbourhood, will be much resorted to for this purpose, especially since the great increase of costs has produced a general dread of going to law.

Nor is this line of beneficence confined to arbitration. Seasonable counsel, coming with the weight which the reputation of the adviser gives it, will often keep or extricate the rash and uninformed out of great difficulties.

Lastly, I know not a more exalted charity than that which presents a shield against the rapacity or persecution of a tyrant.

5. Betwixt argument and authority (I mean that authority which flows from voluntary respect, and attends upon sanctity and disinterestedness of character) something may be done, amongst the lower orders of mankind, towards the regulation of their conduct, and the satisfaction of their thoughts. This office belongs to the ministers of religion; or rather, whoever undertakes it, becomes a minister of religion. The inferior clergy, who are nearly upon a level with the common sort of their parishioners, and who, on that account, gain an easier admission to their society and confidence, have in this respect more in their power than their superiors; the discreet use of this power constitutes one of the most respectable functions of human nature.

DUTY OF PRAYER FOR PRINCES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. FRANCIS ATTERBURY, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

DUTY OF PRINCES TO THEIR PEOPLE.

(PREACHED AT THE CORONATION OF QUEEN ANNE),

BY THE MOST REVEREND JOHN SHARP, D.D., LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

THE DUTY OF SUBJECTS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. O. BLACKALL, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

INTRODUCTION.

THE duties which we owe to the State of which we are citizens form the last, but not the least, portion of a Christian's obligations. Christ, when he commanded us to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," gave us a lesson on this topic that ought never to be forgotten. And St. Paul did but echo the command of his divine Master when he gave us the precept, "Fear God, honour the king." The injunction of our Lord derives a peculiar meaning from the circumstances of the case, and the very coin used as the tribute money. This was the Denarius, in value about sevenpence-halfpenny of our money, paid by the Jews to Rome as an acknowledged tribute. "He saith unto them, Whose image and superscription is this? They say unto him, Cæsar's;" that is, the Roman emperor Tiberius.—his coin. And we may here trace out a deep and neglected point in the consideration of this question. Whose is this image? The head of Cæsar. Whose is this superscription? Cæsar's; that is, it contained his name lettered around the head. The Jews impressed their own coin with no head, nothing but the *pot of manna*, or the *vine*, or the sheaf of corn. They appropriated Roman coin to pay the tribute, thereby acknowledging Cæsar's power—thereby answering the question. Christ, looking on the Roman Denarius, said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Give Cæsar that tribute you have covenanted to pay him; give God that tribute of immensity due to the King of kings. Christ would not mix up his religion with earthly politics. He would not allow them to say truly, as falsely afterwards they did of him, that he forbade to give tribute to Cæsar. He would not allow them to say he mixed up with his religion fleeting views of temporal policy. Cæsar, said he virtually, is your prince, and may demand his tribute. The coin is the king's. Your religion properly and solely belongs to God. He plainly intimates that the money belonged to Cæsar. This right had its rise in their own act of submission to the Roman government, which had obtained an hundred years. He tells them to render to their ruler that which was their ruler's, and to their God that which was due to God. Both principles he declares distinct, and commands their separate discharge.

The duty to the sovereign is justly deducible from this, and

that which is due to the King of kings. Submission even to a Pagan emperor is here enjoined in matters aloof from religion. Nay, Josephus informs us, that when the Jews were made subject to the Romans (though it was by conquest), twice a-day they offered up sacrifices for the life and safety of the emperor. When carried away captive into Babylon, what was the injunction from the King of kings? “ Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof ye shall have peace.” (Jeremiah xxix. 7.) How much more powerfully, then, does this reasoning apply to our natural and spiritual prince, our sovereign. The two great principles, “ fearing God and honouring the king,” are united in adamantine links; the lover of his God will be loyal to his king from positive injunction from his God. A positive injunction from heaven forces the Protestant Church to the latest hour of her earthly being to inculcate love to the sovereign. Attached to the best principles of constitutional loyalty, it is her pride that that constitutional loyalty has been unwavering. Not, like the Papist, dividing it with a foreign power—not, like the Dissenter, who is semi-loyal at the best, swearing allegiance to but one of the two great principles of constitutional loyalty; dividing from the Church, and adhering to the king only as a temporal sovereign; not uniting with us in the principles on which alone true loyalty is based, **CHURCH AND KING**—severing from what is an integral point with every good and loyal subject in the empire—dividing, nay, repealing, the holy union of these in the realm of England’s head in Church and State, our present Protestant sovereign. We then must, good and loyal Churchmen, remember, that by the sovereign we are secured in our civil rights and privileges, and in the quiet and peaceable possession of what is our own; and what is more than this, the *Edict of Toleration*, that protects us in the free practice and exercise of religion. If St. Paul, when the powers of the world did not favour Christianity, could then exhort to pray for kings and all in authority, that, under their protection, they might lead quiet and peacable lives in all godliness and honesty; now, when kings and princes are nursing fathers, and queens the nursing mothers of the Church, shall we not, with added energy, supplicate our God for them?—praying that it will please him to confirm and strengthen our youthful Sovereign in all goodness: to make her, even as an angel of light, to discern between good and evil, that she may know how to go in and out before this great people; that he will give her the united affections of her people, and a heart to study and seek their good all the days of her life; that he will give her counsellors around her throne, holy

men, that may strengthen regal piety and promote the sovereign's intentions to forward all goodness, faith, virtue, temperance, holiness; and that God may grant her, and her princely consort, a long and prosperous life, and that their posterity in the royal Protestant line of Guelph may endure for ever, and their throne as the days of heaven.

Our tribute to God is not to be paid in this world's currency, but in the *nobler mintage of the mind*—in rendering unto God that tribute of entire devotedness that is his due—deeply infixing within us his image, and from that image's all-holy splendour framing our mind-currency. And if a temporal monarch claim just honour to his image, inscription, and edict, what honour is due to him who fills the eternal throne, whose basement man cannot describe, nor can the rapid speed of angel encircle. The eternal and Almighty Lord of the spirits of all flesh, and of whatever other singular varieties of being are extended through the infinity of his will, what tribute can be paid by such a speck in being as man, worthy of One thus glorious, thus omnipotent? None. But yet the voice of that omnipotent has commanded man to render unto him the homage of his heart: “My son, give me thine heart” has been the bland and gentle tone of him who shakes all nature by a word. Men might hesitate, as the heathens did, and deem the God above them cold and unaffected with feelings unto man from the very immensity of his nature. The providence of the Christian God extends over all his works, and he demands from all the tribute due to their Creator, and in our case doubly due, for we have to render fresh tribute of admiration, since it is, by unutterable mercy, our peculiar privilege to enjoy the grace of a Redeemer.

The duties of Christians towards their earthly rulers may be also illustrated by a view of the first institution of regal authority. We are sometimes told by the disaffected, that the royal power itself was granted in vengeance to the Jews, and intended as a curse; but first, it must be remembered, that royalty was far older than Saul, and that it had been long previously under the especial protection of God. Yet there are those who maintain the democratic view of the case, and refuse to believe in the divine origin of civil government, notwithstanding every possible sanction from holy writ. It never was viewed as evil in itself, but the position of Israel then was a holy theocracy, where the arm of God visibly interposed in their behalf, when the *Lord their God was their king*. We can easily conceive that the best form of *mortal* power was inferior to *divine*. We can easily conceive a nation sinning grievously when this the visible arm of God was over them, directing their laws, when it became cla-

morous for an earthly sovereign, unheeding the divine. The kingly power was not then inflicted as a punishment on men ; but the original demand for it by Israel, *at that peculiar and momentous crisis*, when the Lord of Hosts was their visible leader and sovereign, was sinful. But, to the king, the word of the apostle is, “*honour him.*” The king is to receive honour, as the great visible director of laws and ordinances ; he, in a manner, may be said to hold in his hand the delegated power of heaven, and though subject, from his uncontrolled position, to numerous temptations, the king ought to remember that he is to exhibit that order of life, that regularity of morals, and that devotedness to God that may spread wide among his subjects the virtues of the throne. He must rule in the fear of God, and keep no one next his person who does not exhibit the same fear. His power is sustained by the book of God ; woe be to him if he do despite to the sacred book. Woe be to him if such madness be his as to hearken to men who would sap the very pillars on which the kingly throne is based. But let us not be mistaken, we hold that even then there is an honour due unto his office, which his subjects must respect, and by the humblest means of earnest remonstrance and respectful entreaty they must endeavour to show their sovereign their sense of his high office, and their feeling that it should be as an holy thing. That the kingly crown should blaze like the high priest’s pectinal with lustre, beautifully significant that he is the ruler from the Most High. To us the kingly authority is the great source of liberty, and in its meet direction we trace the numerous benefits that surround our happy land. We are not ruled by an arbitrary power, but every one of us enjoys the liberty in all matters of an appeal to persons in his own sphere of being and action. And when we trace the evils of that dreadful period, when it pleased heaven to deprive us of our sovereign—when the butchered monarch laid his head upon the block in preference to sacrificing the Established Church—when the scaffold streamed with the blood of Strafford, Laud, and other noble victims—when they became sacrificed to a spirit of puritanical cant blended with republican sentiment—when the new power instantly became more absolute than that which it had deposed—we must feel assured, that in supporting the crown we uphold prosperity, right, and religion. The sovereign, in this country, is the head in Church and State, as far as his office is concerned ; and though we give not to him the power of ministering either God’s word or sacraments, we allow him that prerogative which we see to have been always given to all godly princes, in holy writ, by God himself, that they should rule all estates and degrees

committed to their charge by God, whether ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers. Such, then, being the king's place in Church and State, we must pay him fitting honour. We must render to him the allegiance of the lip and the loyalty of the life. We must do this on the double ground of the *civil* and the *ecclesiastical* authority which he possesses. We must do it as a civil and a religious duty—as an edict of man—as an ordinance of God. All Protestants holding no divided allegiance, but being united on this principle, must be as loyal to their king as devoted to their God.

With them must dwell, in beautiful union, the earthly lustre of loyalty combined with the holier and more heavenly allegiance to the King of kings and Lord of lords. The good subject to the heavenly Ruler cannot fail to be such to the earthly, and most assuredly will draw from the higher principle inducements not to neglect the inferior. He may sorrowing see the kings of the earth, at times, not realizing their important stations and duties—not coming up to the mighty requisitions demanded of them; but he will mourn over them with no evil feeling. The mourning of David over Saul, will be his; but he will remember it is written, “Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people,” and he will throw the veil of Christian charity over the failings of the mighty. He will be free from all hatred to the office that, in itself, will command in his sight veneration. Finally, he will be *full of eyes within*, and delight, with those gifted creatures of God (in the Apocalypse), in rendering all glory where spotless rule, unerring wisdom, and supremest Majesty resides, exclaiming, “Holy, holy, holy, *Lord* God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”

We have felt a more than ordinary interest in reverting to the writings of those eminent prelates who brightened the reign of our last female sovereign, to adduce lessons for our guidance under our present Queen. The character of Anne was one, which, while it had its faults, was yet eminently good; she was, indeed, “a nursing mother” to the Church, and her personal unaffected piety—her sense of duty towards her people—her care for their spiritual welfare—justly entitled her to that enviable appellation, “The Good Queen Anne.” It was under the reign of Elizabeth that the Reformation was firmly established; it was under that of Anne that the most energetic attempts were made to render the machinery of the Church co-extensive with the increased population of the kingdom; and we look forward to a similar series of exertions, on a still larger scale,

which may make perpetually illustrious the reign of another English Queen.

Already do we perceive the increased zeal, and the increased activity, which must usher in such seasons of blessing from the Lord, and among many causes of rejoicing, which offer themselves to us as Anglican Churchmen, we may mention the growing spirit of intelligent loyalty. That there are large classes of persons discontented, we know but too well ; but among Churchmen we find every day a closer union in Christian politics—a deepening conviction that men have duties to the State, which they are bound *as Christians* to fulfil, and that these duties are not the less binding upon them because the enemies of the Church dislike and malign those who fulfil them.

W.

CAMBRIDGE.

St. Mark's Day, 1842.



THE DUTY OF PRAYER FOR PRINCES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. FRANCIS ATTERBURY, D.D., BISHOP OF ROCHESTER.

1 TIMOTHY ii. 1, 2, 3.

I exhort, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men ; for kings, and all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty : for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour.

THERE was nothing by which the enemies of Christianity endeavoured, and hoped so much to retard the progress of it, as by representing to princes and rulers that the propagation of this doctrine tended to subvert their government ; that the spreaders of it, wherever they came, exceedingly troubled cities, and turned the world upside down. It behoved the apostles, therefore, to guard against this objection with all imaginable care. As they knew that the great work in which they were employed was not as yet to be promoted, or countenanced, by the powers of this world, so they resolved to give them no just ground, or colour, to obstruct it ; and wisely, therefore, took all occasions to declare their abhorrence of such as despised dominion, and spake evil of dignities ; frequently pressed upon their new converts the duties of paying honour, and fear, and tribute to the higher powers [as being the ordinance of God], and of submitting themselves to them, not only for *wrath*, but also for *conscience sake*. And for this reason, it may be presumed that St. Paul introduceth his instructions to Timothy, the new bishop of Ephesus, by exhorting him, that, in order to a due discharge of his high trust, he should *first of all*, or above all things, take care that “supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men ; especially for kings, and all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all Godliness and honesty : for this (says he) is good, and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour.”

The exhortation hath a double aspect on mankind in general, and on princes and rulers in particular. I shall consider it with regard to the latter of these only, for whose sake the apostle seems chiefly to have made it; and under this view it suggests to us three heads of discourse, very proper to be handled on this day, and in this assembly.

1. It recommends a great duty to us, the duty of “making supplications, prayers, and intercessions, and of giving thanks, for kings, and all that are in authority.”

2. It expresses the general reason and ground of that duty: “for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour.”

3. It quickens us to the exercise of it by a special motive, drawn from the consideration of our own ease, advantage, and happiness; “that we may lead a quiet and a peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.”

These points I shall first consider and explain, in that latitude with which the apostle hath proposed them; and then adapt the general argument to the particular occasion of this day’s joyful solemnity.

I. The writers on this place have distinguished with some exactness between supplications, prayers, and intercessions, and endeavoured to give us the strict and proper sense of each of each of these words; which, I think, it is neither necessary nor easy to determine. Sure we are, that by all these together the apostle intended to express the petitionary part of our devotions; and by *giving of thanks*, the other part, which consists of hymns and praises. These two comprise the whole of our religious service; and in both these ways we are exhorted to address ourselves to God, “for kings, and all that are in authority,” *i. e.*, for the supreme magistrate, and all inferior and subordinate governors.

Ancient and modern interpreters agree to understand this passage of the public offices, or devotions of the Church: and, indeed, the episcopal character of Timothy, to whom the exhortation is addressed; the instructions which immediately follow, and manifestly relate to the same head of public worship; and the professed design of St. Paul in writing this epistle, which was to instruct Timothy how he ought to behave himself in the house of God, do, I think, naturally and necessarily determine us so to understand it. Especially, if we consider that the exhortation, thus understood, was agreeable to the practice of the Jewish Church—the pattern which, in matters of worship, discipline, and government, the apostles chiefly followed. And

accordingly, we find the earliest apologist for Christianity representing it as the constant and known usage of the first Christians, in all their sacred assemblies, to pray for the lives of their emperors, and for the prosperity of their state and government.

Our Church is in this, as in other respects, truly primitive; for thus we pray daily in her Liturgy. And what we do every day, we may, at some times, be allowed to perform more devoutly and solemnly; even as often as the course of the year shall bring on that happy day when her Majesty first began to reign on the throne of her ancestors, and in the hearts of her subjects, and to refresh this Church and State with the kind influences of her mild and gracious administration. Whenever this annual season of joy returns, a lively and affecting sense of the mercies it conveyed to us, cannot but return with it; which we have no better way of expressing than by offering up to God (as now we do, and are by St. Paul exhorted to do) our devoutest thanks for the blessings we already feel, and our most earnest prayers for the continuance and increase of them.

The reason and ground of which duty is thus, in the

II. Second place, expressed: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour." It is good, *i. e.*, highly decent, expedient, and reasonable in itself; and, therefore, "acceptable in the sight of God, our Saviour;" a performance particularly well pleasing to Him, by whom kings reign, of whose power they partake, and whose image and superscription they bear. Let us take a distinct view of the several springs from whence our obligation to this duty may be supposed to arise. And,

First,, our applications to God in behalf of the princes and rulers of this world are highly reasonable, as they are proper expressions of our good-will to mankind, whose fate is in their hands, and whose welfare in great measure depends upon their actions and conduct. Sovereign princes and states are the chief instruments, which the providence of God employs in his administrations here below, and by which he brings about all those mighty events that fix or unsettle the peace of the world. When these great wheels move irregularly, the whole machine of state is presently rendered unserviceable, and numberless depending motions are either stopped or disordered.

The execution of all laws is entrusted with them; and laws are the source of every advantage that redounds to mankind from society, which without them would not be preferable to solitude. To the influence of these it is owing that we can call anything our own, even life itself, and are sheltered

from the attacks which the lusts and passions of men, not restrained by the principles of reason and religion, would be every day making upon us—that we are polished in our manners, and bred up in all the arts of civil life, which can render us useful or agreeable to each other—and, chiefly, that we have opportunities of thus appearing before God, and praising him in the great congregation, of hearing his everlasting Gospel expounded to us, and being directed in all those paths of piety and virtue which lead to peace in this world, and to everlasting life in the next.

“Of law (said the excellent Mr. Hooker long since, with a compass of thought and a force of words peculiar to him)—of law, no less can be acknowledged than that her seat is in the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world ; that all things in heaven and earth do her homage ; the very least, as feeling her care, and the greatest, as not exempt from her power ; both angels, and men, and creatures, of what kind soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with one uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.” He, therefore, upon whose authority and will the observation of human laws depends, hath the happiness or misery of mankind in his power ; the earth and all the inhabitants thereof would be dissolved, did not such persons bear up the pillars of it.

Nay, even the example of princes is itself a living law to their subjects, which fashions them by degrees into a likeness of manners, and spreads its influence insensibly but powerfully through cities and kingdoms.

So that to make supplications for kings, that their government may be wise, just, and prosperous, is to pray at once for all the temporal felicities which can accrue to us : a good reign being the most universal and comprehensive blessing which either man can ask or God bestow, and for which we have as much reason to be thankful as for the light of the sun, for temperate weather, and fruitful seasons.

Even an ill prince cannot help doing a great deal of good by preserving some degree of order and government in the world ; and, therefore, even such an one hath a title to our prayers and thanksgivings. But when virtue ascends the throne, it dispenses blessings without number and without measure, and spreads its influence on all around and beneath it. “ Its going forth is from the end of a kingdom, and its circuit to the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof. Happy are the people that are in such a case :” they have great reason to bless who are thus blessed of the Lord. But,

Secondly, as the virtues and vices of those who govern operate on all inferior ranks of men, in the way of natural causes, so have they another and a more extraordinary effect, inasmuch as God doth often take occasion to reward or punish a people, not only by the means of good or ill princes, but even for the sake of them. Plain instances of this kind we have recorded in Scripture, particularly where subjects have suffered for the iniquities of those who were set over them, and the vengeance merited by the one hath been inflicted, and, as it were, transferred on the other. Whether it be that the good or ill conduct of rulers is sometimes owing to their people, and may therefore justly be imputed to them, or whether (as in the case of visiting the sins of parents on their children) by making them mutually liable to the consequences of each other's actions, God intends to imprint a mutual concern and endeavour for each other's welfare, and to unite them together in the strictest bands of interest and affection. Whatever the reason of God's dealing in this manner with princes and states may be, sure we are that he doth thus deal with them, and that this is one chief article in that scheme of political justice by which he governs the world. And can there be a better argument for our interceding with God in the behalf of kings, and all that are in authority, than this, that we are really at such times interceding for ourselves? since we may be chastised for their transgressions, and reap the rewards of their piety and goodness. Further,

Thirdly, the cares of empire are great, and the burthen which lies upon the shoulders of princes very weighty; and on this account, therefore, they challenge, because they particularly want our prayers, that they may "have an understanding heart, to discern between good and bad, and to go out and in before a great people." With what difficulties is their administration often clogged, by the perverseness, folly, or wickedness, of those they govern? How hard a thing do they find it to inform themselves truly of the state of affairs, where fraud and flattery surround, and take such pains to mislead them? How nice a task is it to distinguish between the extremes of allowing too much liberty, and affecting too much power? To what daily dangers are their persons exposed, from the attempts of treachery and violence? How particular and pressing are the temptations to which the height of power they have attained makes them liable? They are above the reach of fear, reproof, and most of those outward checks which God has placed as guards upon private men's virtue, and are, on that account, in great danger of letting loose their appetites and passions in all manner of excesses,

without an extraordinary degree of God's restraining grace; which, therefore, it becomes and concerns us to beg of him and for them.

Christian charity and beneficence is a debt which we owe to kings as well as to the meanest of their subjects. But how shall we extend our good offices to those who move in so high a sphere? how but by applying ourselves to One that is yet higher than they, even our common Lord and Master, and humbly implore the aids of his good Spirit, to comfort, support, and guide them. This is the only compensation or return which most of us are capable of making to them for their vigilance and concern for the public safety, the pains which they take, and the hazards which they run to secure it.

And to encourage our requests in their behalf, we may consider, in the fourth place, that the providence of God doth, in a very particular manner, interpose towards swaying the wills and affections, directing or over-ruling the intentions of those who sit at the helm; for "the king's heart is in the hand of God; as the rivers of waters, he turneth it whithersoever he listeth." He gives a bent to it this way or that, which it takes as certainly and easily as a stream is derived into the channels which the hand of the workman prepares for it. On this foundation our Church professes to build the duty and the expedience of praying for princes: "We are taught (says she) by the holy word, that the hearts of kings are in thy rule and governance, and that thou dost dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to thy godly wisdom." Indeed, the Spirit of God operates on the spirits of all men, but not in so copious, so powerful and extraordinary a manner as it doth on the spirits of princes, which God delighteth to refrain, and by that means to show himself "wonderful among the kings of the earth." It is the chief care, the peculiar province, the great prerogative of the King of kings, to rule the thoughts of those who rule the actions of others, and thereby to bring about the ends, the mysterious and inscrutable ends of his providence. And it is well for mankind that there is a Being who hath and exerciseth such a power; for unless thiere were, human power left to itself would make wild work in the world; the chariot of government would be often and dangerously misguided by rash unskilful drivers, did not an invisible hand hold the reins, and gently direct the course of it.

The Scripture seems to intimate that God hath appointed tutelar angels to act under him for this purpose; at least, that such ministering spirits there were before the erection of the mediatorial kingdom of our Saviour. For in Daniel we read of

particular princes or patrons assigned from the angelic host, to the Grecians and Persians, in order, as is piously believed, to encourage, enlighten, and protect the governors of those estates and empires. We are interested more nearly in the welfare and good conduct of princes than those ministering spirits are; shall we not have some share in procuring it? Ought we not with our utmost zeal to assist those whom God, for our sakes, vouchsafes in so eminent a manner to direct and assist? And what better way of assisting them have we, than by our supplications and thanksgivings?" Which, let me add, in the

Last place, are never on this occasion so becomingly and forcibly addressed to God as in the great congregation. Blessings of a public nature and influence require as public and solemn acknowledgments; and the proper way of obtaining mercies which affect many, is by pouring out the joint requests of many in behalf of them; for in the spiritual, as well as the carnal warfare, numbers are most likely to prevail. The ancients, therefore, represent the strength of such united devotions by that of an army encompassing, besieging God, not to be defeated or resisted by him. "We come together in troops, as it were, and surround God with our prayers; this violence of ours is well pleasing to him."* We then ask, and we then give thanks, with the greatest alacrity and earnestness, and, consequently, with the surest hope of acceptance and success, when we excite and warm each other into this holy performance; and with one heart and one mouth utter the awakening words which the devout Psalmist used, as a solemnity like this which we are now met to celebrate: "This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice in it. Help now, O Lord; O Lord, send us now prosperity. God is the Lord, who hath showed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, yea, even to the horns of the altar."

III. I have explained the grounds and reasons of the duty intimated to us in those words of the text: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." I proceed to consider the special motive there proposed, to quicken us into the exercise of it, "That so we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." I shall briefly show in what respects the devotions recommended by the apostle contribute to this end; and how far, therefore, our own ease, advantage, and happiness is concerned in paying them. And,

First, they have a plain tendency this way, as they are a pre-

* Coimus ad Deum (saith one of them) ut, quasi manu facta, presentationibus eum **ambiamus**, haec vis Deo **grata est.**"

vailing argument with God to to dispose and incline the minds of princes, that they may study to promote the quiet, good, and prosperity of their kingdoms. If we believe our prayers to have any effect, we cannot doubt their usefulness in this particular, which is too evident to need a farther enlargement.

Secondly, such prayers facilitate our “leading a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty,” inasmuch as they express, in the most significant manner, our love, and zeal, and reverence towards the persons of princes, and by such instances of duty invite them to make us suitable returns. They effectually prevent those jealousies which men clothed with sovereign power are too apt to entertain of their inferiors, and promote that good understanding between them, which is the common interest, and should be the common aim, of both, and wherein the security and happiness of all well-ordered states chiefly consists. The holy wishes and vows we make for their welfare will engage their unwearied endeavours for ours; and the thanksgivings put up by us for the tranquillity we enjoy under their reign, will move them to afford us fresh and frequent occasions for new ones.

Particularly the Church is in this way best capable of giving aid and assistance to the state, and by that means of deserving and securing its protection and favour. This is the spiritual tribute and custom which she pays to the supreme magistrate, and for which she receives in exchange all the temporal blessings and encouragement that flow from the munificence of princes, and make her not only to subsist, but flourish.

Thirdly, “a quiet and peaceable life” is the fruit of these public devotions, as we ourselves derive from thence a spirit of meekness, submission, and respect to our superiors, and are led into an habitual love and practice of those mild graces and virtues which we at such times solemnly exercise and pray God to inspire us with, and which, when generally practised, make crowns sit easy on the heads of princes, and render them and their subjects equally a blessing to each other. Such as sincerely pray for the prosperity of a state, are not likely to disturb it themselves, or to push on others into attempts against the peace of it: they come out of the Church still more devoted to their prince and country than they went in; more zealous and better qualified to discharge their duty to the public, in their several places and stations.

IV. I have sufficiently explained the exhortation of St. Paul, and the general arguments and motives by which he enforceth it. The best way of closing and applying these reflections will be, to take a view of the character of those princes, on whose

behalf the apostle presseth on the Christians of his time the practice of this duty, and from thence to show how much stronger obligations we are under of complying with it. And,

First, the princes for whom the apostle pleads were infidels, “without Christ, aliens from his commonwealth, and strangers from the covenants of his promise:” and such also they were, by the permission of God, to continue for three hundred years after the coming of our Saviour, that so his Gospel might not owe its first establishment in any degree to the secular powers, but might spread and fix itself everywhere without their help, and against their will, and manifest to all the world its divine original by the miraculous manner in which it should be propagated. The kings of the earth were not, during this period, to promote the belief of the Gospel any otherwise than by opposing it. When the rest of the world had come in and owned our Saviour, then, and not till then, were the rulers of it to submit their sceptres to the sceptre of Christ, to embrace, protect, and encourage his doctrine, but not to plant it; that in this sense also, the prediction of our Lord concerning the progress of his kingdom, and the call of believers, might be verified, that the last of men should be first, and the first last.

If then the tribute of supplications and thanksgivings was due to those heathen princes, is it not much more due to those who are Christians—who are engrafted as principal members into that mystical body of which Christ Jesus is the head—who, under him, are the chief governors of his Church here below, and guardians of all her sacred rights and privileges? They beseech and they praise God together with us, in the same common assemblies; and we are, therefore, doubly obliged to beseech and to praise God for them. It may be observed, in the

Second place, that the Roman emperors, for whom the apostle here directs that prayers should be made, were usurpers and tyrants, who acquired dominion by invading the liberties of a free people, and were arbitrary and lawless in the exercise of it. Their will and pleasure was the sole standard of justice. Fear was the foundation of their government, and their throne was upheld only by the legions which surrounded it.

Even for such rulers the first Christians were exhorted to supplicate, and give thanks. How much more reasonably and cheerfully do we, who are met here this day, now offer up that sacrifice for a queen,* who wears the crown of her forefathers,

* This, which was written of Queen Anne, is not less applicable to her present Majesty.

to which she is entitled by blood, and which was placed on her royal head, not only with the free consent, but with the universal joy and acclamations of her subjects—who rules a willing people, not by the terror of rods and axes, but with the indulgent tenderness of a common parent—who desires rather to be beloved than feared by them, and takes the truest way toward securing their utmost love by showing, in every step of her gracious conduct, that she entirely loves them—who hath no interest separate from theirs, and upon whom malice itself could never fasten a suspicion of her pursuing any measures which aimed rather at her own glory or advantage, than the common good of England?

The law is as much a rule to her as to the least of those who obey her—the fixed measure, not only of her governing power, but even of her will to govern; and she makes no other use of that power, with which the laws have invested her, than to give life and force to them.

The blessings of her mild and merciful government descend from the throne upon her people as the small rain cometh down into a fleece of wool, without vehemence or noise; like the drops of rain that water the earth, gently and insensibly. She draws up the free offerings of our love and duty, only to return them back again in showers of royal bounty, which make glad the land, and produce a mighty increase.

Surely our lips cannot be better employed than in praising God for such mighty benefits as these, and for the blessed hand through which he conveys them.

Thirdly, those who governed the world, at or near the time of St. Paul's writing this epistle, had no personal merits or virtues to recommend them to the prayers of the faithful. Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, under whom the Christian faith was disseminated, and for all whom we may presume the faithful equally made their supplications, were not only bad princes, but bad men—infamous for their lust, cruelty, and other vices. But they were in authority, and that gave them a right to be mentioned in the stated offices of the Church.

How different from their case is ours, whose eyes behold on the throne a queen who deserves to sit there, as well by her virtue as by her birth! Who, in that public and exalted station preserves all the innocence and sanctity of a private life; who is superior to all the temptations which a great power suggests, and which nothing but as great goodness ever overcomes; and to whom, therefore, her subjects seem

to be almost as much obliged for the shining pattern of unaffected piety which she sets them, as for all the other blessings of her prosperous reign. The accession of such a queen to a crown is indeed a felicity which we may commemorate annually with a devout and a sincere joy. God grant that we may commemorate it often ! And that we may still find more and more reason thankfully to acknowledge it !

Finally, the emperors of Rome, for whom the primitive Christians were obliged to pray and to give thanks, were their avowed enemies and persecutors, who did what they could to hinder the establishment of the Church of Christ, and to suppress those very assemblies wherein these devotions were offered up to God in their behalf.

Whereas she, for whom we now adore and bless the good providence of God, is, by her office, and by her inclination, the defender and friend, the patroness and nursing-mother of His Church established amongst us. In this Church she was baptized and bred, and therefore naturally loves it. She was made early and thoroughly acquainted with its doctrine and government, and consequently values it. She hath been a religious frequenter of its worship, and a steady adherer to its interest ; and would have been prepared, in times of distress and danger, to suffer with it and for it. From her, therefore, now she is advanced to a throne, all the members and ministers of this Church may justly promise themselves, not only the opportunity of “ leading a quiet and peaceable life” (the utmost which the first Christians could hope for from their emperors), but farther advantages ; not merely protection, but all suitable instances of royal favour and encouragement.

THE DUTY OF PRINCES TO THEIR PEOPLE.

(PREACHED AT THE CORONATION OF QUEEN ANNE).

BY THE MOST REV. JOHN SHARP, D.D., LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK.

ISAIAH xlix. 23.

Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.

I AM aware how much time the following solemnity will take up, and therefore I mean to give as little interruption to it as possible, being very sensible that the shortness of my sermon will be the best recommendation of it. Three things I beg leave to do upon this occasion :

First, to give some account of the promise here made in my text; and what obligation it lays upon princes, with relation to their subjects.

Secondly, to congratulate with you and the whole kingdom, the happy prospect we have of God's making good this promise to us at this day, in settling her present Majesty upon the throne of her ancestors.

Thirdly to show what returns of duty, and gratitude, and filial obedience, this consideration of the queen's being a nursing mother to her people, doth call for from us, and all other her subjects.

I begin with the first.

This chapter out of which I have taken my text, hath always been understood to be, and it certainly is, a prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the propagation of his religion, and the spreading of his Church throughout the world; and it teacheth us, that though the beginnings of this religion, this Church of Christ, were very small and inconsiderable, yet in due time a vast number of nations and people should be brought in to it; so that kings and queens should submit their sceptres to that of Jesus Christ, and become nursing fathers and nursing mothers to his Church and people.

As for the fulfilling of this promise, especially among us of this nation, I shall say something by and by. That which I

now desire to take notice of, is the terms by which the relation between Christian princes and their people is here expressed—nursing fathers and nursing mothers.

Let us take these terms in what sense we will, whether for natural parents, or for those that supply the place of parents in the taking care of children—that is to say, guardians or nurses; yet the relation in both these notions doth imply a wonderful trust reposed in princes, and a wonderful care and solicitude and tenderness required of them on the behalf of their subjects.

“Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers.” Oh! if all Christian princes considered this, and looked upon themselves as placed by God on their thrones for the making good this office and character, with what a zeal would it inspire them for their people’s good!

They would then look upon the whole kingdom as their own family, and concern themselves as much for the welfare of their subjects, as parents do for their children, or guardians for their pupils.

It would be impossible, upon this supposition, that ever they should make their own interest distinct or separate from those of their people. How great soever their powers or prerogatives were, yet they would never think them well employed but when the public good was promoted by them. Nor could they propose any other end to themselves in their government, but to defend those under their charge from all insults from abroad, and to maintain them in peace at home, and to make every soul of them as happy as their condition will bear.

And for the doing of this they would think themselves obliged, above all things, to take care of the Church of God, remembering that it is chiefly with respect to that, that they have the charge of being nursing fathers and nursing mothers. As such, therefore, they would make it their business to maintain and defend the true religion, to encourage piety and virtue, to oppose and discountenance all atheism and infidelity, all heresies and schisms, and all vice, and wickedness, and impiety, of what nature soever. They would use their utmost endeavour to make all their subjects good men and good Christians, as knowing that it is impossible for them to be happy, even in this world, without being so.

And in order to this they would be sure, in their own persons, to set good examples to their subjects, of piety and devotion, of temperance and moderation, and all other virtues. And they would likewise take care, as much as in them lay, that all that are about them did the like.

They would be continually thinking of that psalm of David

which he composed upon his being advanced to the kingdom of Israel, and wherein he declares the rules he resolved to observe in his government. It is the hundred and first psalm. “I will sing (saith he) of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing. O let me have understanding in the way of godliness. When wilt thou come unto me? I will walk in my house with a perfect heart. I will take no wicked thing in hand: I hate the works of the unfaithful; no such shall cleave unto me. A froward heart shall depart from me; I will not know a wicked person. My eyes look upon such as are faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me. Whoso leadeth a godly life he shall be my servant.....I shall soon destroy all the ungodly that are in the land, that I may root out all wicked doers from the city of the Lord.”

And as such nursing fathers and nursing mothers as we are speaking of, would thus concern themselves for God and his religion, and the spiritual interests of their people, so no less solicitous would they be to secure and promote their temporal peace and happiness; and accordingly they would think themselves obliged, as much as they could, to look into the affairs of the kingdom with their own eyes, and to see that all the magistrates under them did their duty in their respective stations and offices. They would take care not to suffer their favourites to encroach upon them, nor ever to make use of their credit with the prince for the oppressing the meanest of the people. But they would provide that impartial justice should be administered to all their subjects; but yet such justice as is tempered with mercy, remembering what God hath told them in the Scriptures, that “their thrones shall be upholden by mercy.”

In a word, as the ends they proposed to themselves in their government would be the good of their people, so the measures they pitched upon for the administration of it would be accordingly—that is to say, in such a constitution as ours, where the people have their fixed rights, and liberties, and properties, the standing laws of the kingdom would always be the rule of their actions; nor would they either violate those laws themselves, or give any dispensation, or even encouragement, to others to do it.

O how happy is that people that have such princes to reign over them! They are out of all fears of despotic or arbitrary proceedings. Indeed, arbitrariness is a word fit for none but God, for all his creatures are under laws by which they must be governed; and yet I think it is an affront to God to say that even he himself ever acts arbitrarily, in the sense we commonly use that word.

God doth, indeed, “whatsoever pleaseth him, both in heaven

and in earth." But then that pleasure of his is always governed by the eternal laws of wisdom, and righteousness, and goodness, which are essential to his own mind.

We may likewise truly say, that God doth all things, both in heaven and in earth, for his own glory; but then that glory doth only consist in the manifestation of his excellences and perfections to his creatures, and doing them the greatest good they are capable of.

Now such a glory as this it is allowable to every man in his sphere to be ambitious of; but princes ought to be so above all others, for by this they truly imitate God, and make good their character of being his representatives upon earth—a sort of gods among men, as the Scripture often calls them. And by governing after this way they render themselves truly glorious, in being esteemed, and loved, and honoured while they live, and transmitting their memories with a grateful odour to all succeeding generations.

But for the most absolute princes upon earth to use their power for the oppressing or doing hurt to the meanest of mankind, or to think of advancing their glory by any other methods than by doing all the good they can to all the world, and especially to their own subjects: this is being arbitrary in a wicked sense, and gives such a notion of glory as was not known among the creatures of God till the revolt of the fallen angels, from whom some of the corrupted mass of mankind, by their instigation, have since taken it.

But I proceed to my second point, to speak something of the fulfilling of this prophecy in my text, of "God's raising up kings and queens to be our nursing fathers and nursing mothers."

And blessed be God this promise hath for many ages, from time to time, been made good to abundance of nations and people, but to none more amply, more signally, than to us of this kingdom.

As the Christian faith was planted here as early almost as in any nation (for it was planted here in the time of the apostles, and probably by one of them), so if we may believe our histories, it was this country of ours to which God vouchsafed the honour of having the first Christian king* in Europe, and consequently the first nursing father; and likewise the honour of giving birth to that emperor † who was the first nursing father to all Christendom; so early was this promise of God to his Church fulfilled among us.

It is not likewise a little to the honour of our nation, nor a

* King Lucius.

† Constantine.

little argument of God's care over us, that when the liberties of all Christian kings and people were invaded and oppressed by the Papal usurpations, and Christianity itself was corrupted by superstition and idolatry, it was an English king that first threw off the foreign yoke, and it was an English king also that first begun the reformation of religion.

But the honour of perfecting that great work was reserved for a queen. You all know whom I mean—the immortal Elizabeth—whose name will be precious, not only in this nation, but in all the reformed countries of Europe as long as time shall last.

Her reign alone will let us see that it was not without great reason that in my text queens are joined as equal sharers with kings, in making up the blessing which is here promised to God's people.

And such another queen, we trust, God has now given us.

We ought, indeed, to admire God's goodness to us; often have we provoked him by our manifold sins and impieties, and often hath he punished us for them; but yet in his judgments he hath always remembered mercy; when we have been in our greatest distresses, he hath always raised up deliverers to us.

Even then, when our constitution was not long since (not so long since but that many here present may remember it) quite subverted by factions at home, yet in a little time did he restore our lawful king, and with him our Church, and laws, and liberties.

And when upon his death all of them were again in danger by a faction from another quarter, and we had no prospect but of sinking under the calamity, yet then he raised up our late king and queen of glorious memory, to rescue us from our dangers, and to secure us in the possession of all that was dear and valuable to us.

So that, blessed be God, we still continue upon the same bottom we were; we have still the same religion, the same Church, the same government; we still enjoy the same rights and liberties and properties that ever we did. O may they for ever be continued to us and our posterity! and we hope in God's mercy that they will.

For though it hath pleased him to deprive us of these two great blessings by taking to himself, first our incomparable queen, and now lately our king, who was the great support, not only of these kingdoms, but of all Europe, yet such is his goodness that he hath preserved to us another branch of the same royal stock to repair our losses. “Ramo uno avulso non deficit alter aureus.”

A sister of our never-to-be-forgotten queen is yet left us; of

whom if we may make presages, either from the long experience we have had of her many personal virtues, expressed in a more private condition, and particularly her firmness to the English Church, and English interest, in the most difficult times.

Or from the instances she has already given since her accession to the throne.

Of her concern for our religion, our laws, our liberties; for the continuance of the crown in the Protestant line; for the government in Church and State, as by law established; all which she has assured us in her gracious declaration, and from the throne, “are as dear to her as any person whatsoever, and that no pains or diligence shall ever be wanting on her part to preserve and maintain them.”

Lastly, of her solemn resolution (declared in her proclamation) “to discountenance and punish all manner of vice, and profaneness, and immorality, in all persons, of whatsoever degree or quality; and particularly in such as are employed near her royal person. And that for the greater encouragement of religion and morality, she will, upon all occasions, distinguish persons of piety and virtue by marks of her royal favour.”

I say, if we may draw good omens from those former experiences of her Majesty’s life, and from these auspicious beginnings of her reign, there is just reason for us all to congratulate with the whole kingdom the happy prospect that we have, that God in setting her upon the throne, hath again fulfilled his promise in my text—hath given us in her another nursing mother to his Church and people, and one who will make good that character in all the instances I have before mentioned.

What have we now to do but to thank God heartily for all the repeated instances of his favour to us, and particularly this last one; and to pray earnestly for her Majesty, that her following reign may be suitable to these happy beginnings.

But in order to these prayers being effectual, there is something required of us which is fit here to be mentioned, as being a natural application of what I have already said.

And that is, that we take care not to hinder or obstruct the happy effects of her Majesty’s gracious intentions to her people, by any unbecoming carriage of ours: but always bear in mind what returns of duty, and gratitude, and filial obedience, this consideration of the queen’s being a nursing mother to her people doth call for from us, and all other her subjects.

This is the third and last thing I proposed to speak to, but for fear of being too long, I shall but just touch upon it.

If all subjects did seriously consider this relation between their princes and them, they would think themselves obliged to

bear the same love and affection, to pay the same honour, and reverence, and obedience, to their nursing fathers and nursing mothers as they do their natural parents.

They would endeavour to make their reigns as easy as was possible, by contributing, every man in his sphere, what assistance they could to their prince, for the promoting the common good.

They would make it their study to live in as much peace and unity with their fellow-subjects, as if they dwelt together in one family.

They would have no interests separate from the commonwealth; nor would they, for the advancing themselves, ever seek the ruin of others.

They would not for difference in opinion about the methods of the public conduct, break out into parties and factions, much less, in case of such divisions, would they sacrifice the peace of the kingdom to their own private resentments, and mingle heaven and earth for the supporting of a side.

They would seriously remember the caution which St. Paul hath given us, and which indeed concerns every one of this nation, but especially those that are concerned in the public management often to think of: "If (saith he) ye bite and devour one another, have a care that ye be not consumed one of another." Nothing can ever so much endanger this kingdom as our own divisions. And if ever we be ruined, in all probability, it is these will be the cause of it.

It is one very good omen (among the rest that I have mentioned) of her Majesty's happy reign, that no prince ever came to the reign with a more general satisfaction, and with more good wishes of the people.

And it must be said, to the honour of this parliament, that never any parliament gave more extraordinary testimonies of their sincere affection, and duty, and kindness to their prince, than this parliament hath given to the queen.

O may this good understanding, these mutual endearments between the queen and her people, for ever continue! And abhorred be the memory of that man that makes the first step towards the breaking of them.

Then shall we be happy; as happy as the vicissitudes of this world will allow us to be. And as the queen will rejoice in her people, so it will be her people's daily prayer, that God would long, long preserve queen Anne!

THE DUTY OF SUBJECTS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. O. BLACKALL, D.D., LORD BISHOP OF EXETER.

PROV. XXIV. 21.

My son, fear thou the Lord, and the King; and meddle not with them that are given to change.

I KNOW not how to begin a discourse upon this subject better than in those words wherewith the judicious Mr. Hooker begins his learned discourse of the laws of ecclesiastical policy. “He (says he) that goes about to persuade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be, shall never want attentive and favourable hearers, because they know the manifold defects whereunto every kind of regiment is subject, but the secret lets and difficulties, which in public proceedings are innumerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily the judgment to consider. And because such as openly reprove supposed disorders of state are taken for principal friends to the common benefit of all, and for men that carry singular freedom of mind; under this fair and plausible colour, whatsoever they utter passes for good and current, that which is wanting in the weight of their speech being supplied by the aptness of men’s minds to accept and believe it. Whereas, on the other side, if we maintain things that are established, we have not only to strive with a number of heavy prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein we serve the time and speak in favour of the present state, because thereby we either hold or seek preferment, but also to bear such exceptions as minds so averted beforehand usually take against that which they are loathe should be poured into them.”

But what would not be so well taken from me, will, I hope, be better taken when coming out of the mouth of a very wise man; and such an one you will surely all acknowledge Solomon to have been. And he it was (it was he who excelled in wisdom all that were before him, and all that have lived since), or rather, it was wisdom itself speaking by his mouth, which has given this advice in the text; which I would now persuade you

to follow—"My son, fear thou the Lord, and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change."

Concerning which it may be first observed in general, that it is given here as a father's advice to his son, "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king;" and from hence we may reasonably conclude that it is very good advice, and that to follow it will be very much for our own profit and advantage. For that is the only end that a father has in the counsel and instruction that he gives his son; he never means anything by it but his son's good; he never advises his son to do anything but what he thinks it will be for his interest to do. And whenever he ushers in any advice in such manner as this here is introduced, with a solemn and particular compellation, serving to excite and fix the attention to what follows, my son, do this, or, my son, do that, it is very reasonable to suppose that he judges the advice which he is then about to give to be matter of the greatest usefulness and importance; it is a sign that it is what he would have his son take a special regard to, and be very careful to observe. And such is, most manifestly, the counsel which the wise father here gives to his son; it is concerning matters of the highest importance, and of the nearest concern to every man—"My son, fear thou the Lord, and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change."

I. For that the first branch of this advice is such, will, I suppose, be readily granted by all, "My son, fear thou the Lord," for "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" the fear of God induces and comprehends our whole duty to him. If we fear God as we ought to do, and as a good son fears his father, we shall readily obey him in every command that he lays upon us. Nay, this comprehends all our duty, not only to God, but to men too, to whom we are to perform all the offices of our relation to them for God's sake, and out of a principle of conscience and obedience to God. Of this fear of God, then, we may say, as our Saviour does of the love of God, and we may truly say it, for indeed the love of God and the fear of God are in substance the same, that it is the first and great commandment, which, if we are careful to keep, according to its true and comprehensive meaning, we shall be deficient in no part of duty.

II. But the second branch of the wise father's advice to his son is also, next to the former, of the highest importance and of the nearest concern. "Fear the king; my son, fear thou the Lord and the king." By which is meant, that our next care to that of keeping a good conscience towards God should be that of behaving ourselves orderly and regularly in that station which God has placed us in, of subordination and

subjection to those men that are set over us by God, with a power to order and enact such constitutions, only not contrary to the divine laws, as are necessary to conserve justice and peace in that society over which they preside. “Fear the king;” that is, obey him, keep his laws, and behave thyself in all things as a dutiful subject towards him; or if thou canst not with a good conscience obey his commands, yet do not dare to resist his authority. If what he commands be lawful, do readily as thou art commanded; or if it be not lawful, which may sometimes be, for the laws of men are not always agreeable to the laws of God, yet even in that case, thou art not discharged from thy subjection to him, for when thou canst not obey, thou must submit, and that not only because thou canst not help it, but although thou couldst, if thou canst not do as he bids thee, thou must take patiently the punishment that is imposed upon thee for thy disobedience.

This is the duty of subjects to their governors, as it is briefly taught in the text, “fear the king;” and more largely in other places of holy Scripture, as in Eccles. viii. 2—“I counsel thee to keep the king’s commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.” In Romans xiii.—“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.” And in 1 Peter ii. 13—“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord’s sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of Christ. Honour all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king.”

This, I say, is the duty, as it is plainly taught in Scripture, of subjects to their governors; that is, to them who have the supreme authority of the nation to which they belong, by whatsoever name or title they are called; that is, to the legislative power, in what hands soever it is lodged by the particular constitution of the place. For there may be, and in some countries there is, the name and title of a king, without the power; and there may be, and in some other countries there is, the power of a king, without the name. Nay, there is indeed in every country, state, kingdom, or commonwealth, the kingly or

the supreme power lodged somewhere or other, either in one, in few, or in more hands. This power, I say, there is in the government of every nation, as well in a democracy or aristocracy, as in a monarchy; and as well in the most limited monarchy, as in that which is the most arbitrary and absolute; and I say, it is this kingly power, wherever it is by the constitution seated or lodged, that is to be feared and obeyed. For the Scripture only declares in general the duties of governors to their subjects, and of subjects to their governors; but it does not expressly define or prescribe any one form or manner of government as necessary to be set up and preserved in all nations, but leaves every country to itself to establish that form of government which is most suitable to its own particular temper and genius. Only when any sort of government is set up and established, there being, as was said before, in every form of government, a kingly, that is, an absolute and arbitrary power lodged somewhere or other, either in one hand or in more, it then commands obedience, and forbids resistance to this sovereign power. It commands submission to this power as to the ordinance of God, “for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God;” and it declares, that they that being placed in subjection to this power do make resistance to it, “resist the ordinance of God, and shall receive to themselves damnation.”

And thus much of the second branch of the wise man’s advice to his son, “My son, fear thou the king.” But before I come to speak of the third, “Meddle not with them that are given to change,” I think it may be of good use to make some brief observations upon the two former branches of it, considered as given together in the same breath, as connected with each other, as depending one upon the other—“fear the Lord and the king.” And,

1. From the order in which these two branches of his advice are placed, “Fear thou the Lord and the king,” it may be observed, that God is to be first feared, then the king, or that God is to be more feared than the king; that no power upon earth has authority to make laws contrary to the divine laws, or to discharge its subjects from those obligations which were before laid upon them by the law of God. This is so evident, that the apostles, when they had been charged by the Jewish sanhedrim to forbear preaching in the name of Jesus (Acts iv. 16, 17), to do which they had before received a command from God, boldly appealed even to the council themselves, to judge and declare whether in such case their order ought to be obeyed, as knowing that they themselves would not dare to affirm, that a

human law could evacuate or set by a contrary law of God (ver. 19). “Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.”

2. From the advice of fearing and obeying the king being immediately subjoined to that of fearing God, and both being given, as it were, in the same breath, “Fear the Lord and the king,” it may be observed, that our highest obligation, next to that of obeying God, is to obey and submit ourselves to those whom God has made his deputies and viceroys here upon earth. And this is the relation wherein earthly kings, that is, the sovereign powers of every state and nation, do stand to God. “By me kings reign, by me princes rule:” so we are told, Prov. viii. 15, 16. “The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will:” so we are taught, Dan. iv. 32. And “there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God,” says the apostle. And again, “He is the minister of God to thee for good; he is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” And from this relation wherein the supreme powers of every nation do stand to God, they themselves are sometimes in Scripture called gods; they are said to “judge, not for man, but for the Lord,” and the judgment that they give is called God’s judgment. Having therefore a sort of god-like power communicated to them by God, it is but fit that, next to God, they should be had in the highest honour by their subjects; and that after the care of religion, the subjects’ next chiefest care should be to behave themselves dutifully to those whom God has set over them, in order to preserve peace and justice in the world—“Fear the Lord and the king.”

3. From the connexion that is made in the text between these two duties, the fear of God, and of the king, it may be farther observed, and most certainly inferred, that they are not repugnant and contradictory, nay, that they are very consistent with each other. So that a good man may both fear God and the king too; and there can never be a necessity lying upon any man from his obligation to discharge one of these duties, to neglect or transgress the other. It is not, therefore, true loyalty, but cowardice or worldly-mindedness, that ever makes men give up their religion and conscience to the humour of their prince, and yield a blind obedience, without reserve or exception, to all his commands, how unjust, how unreasonable, how ungodly and irreligious soever they be; for such submission as this to the will of princes is a manifest contradiction to the first branch of the advice here given, “Fear the Lord.” And on

the other side, it is not true religion and a well-informed conscience, but an ignorant and misguided zeal, or a form of godliness without the power of it, that ever turns religion into rebellion, and faith into faction ; that ever arms subjects against their sovereign ; that ever deposes princes, and unsettles the state, and disturbs the peace and order of the world ; this is as manifest a contradiction to the second branch of the advice, “ Fear the king ; my son, fear thou the Lord and the king ;” we may certainly do both these, or else both would not have been commanded. But it is a thing too evident to be denied, that the laws of princes are not always conformable to the laws of God, and when they are not so, it is impossible that they should be both complied with by an active obedience. “ For (as our Saviour says) no man can serve two masters ;” to be sure, not two whose commands are repugnant and contradictory. In this case, therefore, subjects are not in duty bound to do as they are commanded by their governors ; and yet neither in this case does the precept enjoining them to fear the king become void, and of none effect ; only it then ties them to an obedience of another sort, that is, to a submission of themselves to suffer the punishment of that law which they could not with a good conscience yield an active obedience to. Still the king, that is, the sovereign civil power, must be feared ; and he is feared and obeyed as much as in this case he ought to be, when his authority is not resisted, when, “ out of conscience towards God, we endure grief, suffering wrongfully ; for (as the apostle says) hereunto are we called ; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps ; and so is the will of God, that with well-doing we should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” But,

4. Lastly, what may be further observed and argued from the connexion that seems to be here made between these two first branches of the wise man’s advice, “ My son, fear thou the Lord and the king,” is this, that religion towards God is the best and surest ground of loyalty and due obedience to the king. He that fears God as he ought to do will also fear the king for God’s sake, and because God has commanded him so to do ; his loyalty will be a part of his religion, and he, for the same reason for which he will be ever at all loyal, will be always so. But he that honours his prince upon any other principle will honour him no more nor no longer than while he finds his own interest in it : he flatters his king, but he is no true friend to him ; he serves him only for reward, and will be as ready to betray as to serve him, when he can get more by that than by this.

III. And now I come to speak of the third branch of the wise father's advice to his son—"Meddle not with them that are given to change." In order to the explication of which, it may be needful to enquire—

1. Who they are that may be said to be given to change; and
2. What it is to meddle with such men.

But before I do these things I think it will be expedient, both to prevent any misunderstanding of what shall be said, and likewise for some other good purposes, to take particular notice to whom it is that the advice in the text, not "to meddle with such as are given to change," is directed; "My son, meddle not with them that are given to change."

And here it may be considered, that the giver of this advice was Solomon, who was himself king over Israel, who had himself the whole kingly power, in whom solely, and without any partner or sharer in the government, the whole sovereign authority of the nation, both legislative and executive, was lodged; for this, you know, was the constitution among the Jews, the whole sovereignty was in the king alone; counsellors he might have, but they had no share with him in the legislature, for it was at his free election to take their advice or not, and what he enacted, whether with their advice or without it, was good law. Such a king, I say, was Solomon, who gives this counsel, not "to meddle with such as are given to change;" and it is evident that he gives the advice to another, not to himself; he gives it to his son, who was a subject, not to himself, who was an absolute and a sovereign prince. He gives it to the same person whom, in the clause just before, he had commanded to fear the king; therefore, to be sure, not to the king himself, but to such only as were in subjection to him.

And what I argue and infer from hence is this, that the advice in the text, not to be "given to change," nor to "meddle with such as are given to change," though, as a matter of prudence, it may concern all, king as well as people, the supreme governors of a nation as well as those who are under government, yet, as a matter of duty, it can and must belong only to such as are in subjection, that is, only to the people and subjects. For though, as the apostle says, "there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God," that is, though the power which they have is a portion of the divine power, yet there is no one particular form of government that can truly be said to be of divine institution and appointment; and if there be not, then there is no one form of government but what may be changed and altered, provided that they who make the change have sufficient authority to make it; and sufficient authority he

or they must be allowed to have to make any such change or alteration in the form and manner of the government, who has, or who have for the time being, the supreme and sovereign authority in that nation wherein such change is made. For the sovereign authority of every state or nation, whether it be lodged in one hand or in many, is, and in the nature of the thing must needs be, absolute, unlimited, and uncontrollable. That which is the highest authority in any nation may do what it pleases; and because it is the highest upon earth, can be accountable to none but God for what it does. This sovereign authority, therefore, I say, may make what changes and alterations itself pleases in the frame and constitution of the government; and whatever changes it makes, they are lawful and valid, provided that no natural right of any other man be thereby invaded and violated.

Supposing, therefore, government to be founded originally in the paternal or patriarchal right, yet if that single person in whom the whole sovereign power was lodged by this right, either to give ease to himself, finding the weight of the government too heavy for himself to bear alone, or to give ease to his people, finding that it is with great unwillingness and reluctance that they submit to be governed by his sole will and pleasure, or for any good cause and consideration him thereunto moving, shall think fit to call to his assistance any of his subjects, constituting them his standing council, and declaring and enacting that he will do nothing without them, and that no act or law of his, done without their approbation, shall be of force and binding to his subjects. From this time forward the whole frame and constitution of the government will be clearly altered, and that which was before an absolute will thenceforward become a limited or mixed monarchy; and this change in the constitution, being made by him that had the sovereign power, will be good and valid, neither will it be lawful for him to re-assume again, without consent of this council, that portion of the sovereignty which he had before freely parted with and transferred to them.

And if, the government being thus settled, the sovereign power for the time being, that is, this king with his council, shall both agree to make a further alteration in it—if they shall both agree to lay aside their own superiority, and to devolve the sovereign power that is then lodged in them on the people, and shall enact and declare that no law shall be good and valid but what the majority of the populace shall agree to, by this, that government which was at first an absolute and afterwards a limited monarchy, will become a perfect commonwealth; and after that they shall have thus transferred the whole government

upon the people, and freely parted with their own right to it, it will be unjust in them to re-assume this power, any otherwise than by the free gift of the people on whom they had transferred it.

And on the other side, the case will be exactly the same, if it be supposed that the right of government was originally in the people; for still it will be capable of the like changes and alterations. The sovereignty, wherever it is lodged, may be alienated and parted with to others. If therefore the sovereignty being, as is now supposed, lodged in the people, they, finding the inconveniences of numerous popular assemblies, shall think fit to transfer this power to some few persons delegated and chosen by themselves, from this time forward these delegates or representatives of the people are the supreme power, and the people become mere subjects to them, and may not forcibly take again to themselves that power which they have freely parted with. And again, if this representative body of the people, in which the sovereignty will be then lodged, finding the inconveniences of this sort of government, by reason of the factions they are subject to, shall think fit to make choice of one single person to preside and moderate in their assembly, with a negative or a casting vote, or with what farther degree of power they shall think convenient to bestow upon him; this is a farther alteration of the manner of the government; because, what power they give him they give from themselves, and may not challenge or claim it back again as their due, after they have freely parted with it. And when they do choose such a governor, they may choose him upon what conditions, they may constitute him with what limitations they please; they may, if they will, appoint him only for a year, or other limited time; or they may, if they are so minded, order that the power which they give him shall descend to his heirs after him; and they may call him king, or duke, or stadtholder, or give him any other title they shall think better. And if after this, finding inconveniences in this mixed sort of government, they in whom the supreme power is then lodged—that is, this king, or duke, or whatever else he is called, with his council or parliament, shall both agree together to make a farther alteration in the government; if they shall agree to transfer the whole sovereignty to him, and he shall consent to accept of it, and they do both by a solemn act decree and ordain this Establishment, that government which was at first a democracy, and after that a mixed monarchy, will thenceforward become an absolute monarchy; and any of all these changes or alterations in the form or manner of government, being made by such as for the time being were lawfully possessed of the

sovereign power, will be regularly made; and being once made, will be valid and binding. And in whatsoever hands the sovereignty shall be thus regularly placed, it cannot be regularly taken from thence again, but by his or their own cession or consent.

Thus I think it is evident that no change or alteration of the form of government from one sort to another, is in itself unlawful to be made, provided it be made by those who have power to make it—that is, by the government itself: I mean by him or them, who, for the time being, have the sovereign power in their hands; because, as I said before, there is no one sort or form of government that can truly be said to be of divine institution. The power of government indeed—that is, the power and authority that governors have—is from God. “By me (says he) kings reign, and princes decree justice;” and “there is no power but of God,” saith the apostle; but the designation and appointment of particular persons to the administration of the government, this is human, and the distribution of the power of the government into one or into more hands, this is likewise human. This is the ordinance of man only, and whatever is ordained by man is in its own nature alterable, and may at any time be altered by the same power that ordained it. I do not say it may be altered by the same persons that ordained it, for it is possible that by such ordinance the power may be transferred from one person to another, and what power any man has once given away from himself to another he cannot reclaim as his right; he may receive it again as a gift from him to whom he gave it, but he cannot challenge it again as his due. I say, therefore, I do not affirm, that whatever has been ordained by man may be altered by the same persons that ordained it; I only affirm, that it may be altered by the same power that ordained it. I affirm, that the same human power which has settled the sovereignty in one hand may distribute it into several hands; or if it has settled it in many hands, it may take it thence, and give it into one hand. That same human power which has made the persons of such as have the administration of the government elective, may ordain that they shall be successive; that same human power that can settle a crown in entail, can also cut off the entail of a crown; that same human power that can settle the succession of a crown unconditionally, may appoint conditions, without performing which he that is next heir in course shall not inherit; and whatever establishment of the government the supreme and sovereign power of any nation makes in one age, the supreme and sovereign power, for the time being, of the same nation, may in the next age make null and void. For the

supreme power of every nation is and must needs always be lodged somewhere or other, and the highest power, for the time being, may, for its own time, make what laws and ordinances itself pleases, as to the settlement and administration of the government, which will be good laws till they are repealed. But then the same sovereign power which has authority to make a law, has and always must have as much authority to repeal it, and no one generation of men can ever in such matters so bind the hands and restrain the power of the generations to come, but that they, in their time, will have the same full power to order public affairs according to their own liking that the present generation has. There being, therefore, no mere human constitution but what in its nature is alterable, and I now take it for granted, that the particular form or manner of any government is a mere human constitution, it plainly follows, that the precept in the text, forbidding "to change," or to "meddle with those that are given to change," is not given to the supreme legislative power, which may make what changes in the form of government it thinks reasonable, but only to mere subjects, whose duty it is to be quiet, and to submit to the powers that be, and who will act out of their sphere, and in a matter above their capacity, in case they shall take upon them to unsettle that form of government, whatever it is, that is already established, or to frame and set up a new one.

The supreme legislative power, wherever lodged, is therefore no otherwise concerned in this precept, than only as in a matter of prudence. And so far indeed they are very nearly concerned in it ; it being rarely that any considerable change can be made in the form of a government that has been long established, and under which the commonwealth has prospered and flourished, without more danger of hurt than hope of good to the community : an alteration in the government being like a reparation in the foundation of a house, which if it be necessary to be made, must be made, and yet, unless it be made very cautiously, cannot be done without endangering the downfall of the whole fabric. Whenever, therefore, the supreme power of any nation undertakes to make any change in the established form of government, they ought in prudence to be very well satisfied that such a change is necessary ; and they ought likewise wisely to foresee all the consequences that may probably follow from such a change, and to be well assured that there will be more good than hurt in it. But when they are well satisfied in this, they may then, without any breach of duty or justice, make such alterations therein as they may judge needful. They do no more than they have full power and authority to do, in making such a

change, and it is the duty of subjects to acquiesce in the wisdom of their superiors.

And the reason why I have now mentioned and insisted so largely upon this point is, as I have already hinted, not only in order to give you the true meaning, as I conceive, of this precept, “meddle not with them that are given to change;” but likewise to give ease and satisfaction to the consciences of men, as to some alterations that have been lately made in the government of our own nation.

For you all know, I shall not need to tell you, that the supreme legislative power of this nation is, by the constitution, lodged in the king or queen for the time being, and in the two houses of parliament; that what is enacted by their joint authority is a law of the land, to which they do all three give their consent. And in this essential and most fundamental constitution of the government, there has not, God be thanked, been made, and I hope never will be made, any change or alteration. But as to the succession to the crown, there have been of late made some very considerable limitations; and well had it been for the nation, if the same had been made a hundred years sooner. For whereas formerly the crown descended of course to the next in blood, without any exception, condition, or limitation; it is now limited to descend to the next heir that is a Protestant; and thereby not only one person in particular, who is of uncertain birth, but likewise several others of the Popish religion, of whose legitimacy there has been no doubt, are debarred and excluded from the succession. And it is also declared to be a forfeiture of the crown, for any one that is possessed of it, to be reconciled to the church of Rome, or to marry with a Papist.

Now this, you know, is what some amongst us are stumbled at. First, such a change, they think, ought not to have been made; and, secondly, now that it is made, they think it is null and invalid.

But the first of these is a point which I am at present noways concerned to enquire into, neither, I think are you. They that have power to make such a change are the best, they are indeed the only proper judges of the prudence, the reason, the necessity of it.

All, therefore, that I am concerned to do, in order to give ease and satisfaction to the consciences of those subjects who have any doubts or scruples about the matter, is only to show, that they who made this alteration as to the succession of the crown, had power sufficient to make it, and consequently that now it is made, it is valid and binding; so that all those

who are obliged by law to declare, as all persons in place and office now are, that they do not believe that any person hath now any right or title to the crown of this realm, otherwise than according to this settlement of the succession, may safely and with a good conscience make this declaration.

For this I take to be an undoubted truth, that no man has a natural right to anything in this world, more than to the necessities of life. Whatever right any man has to estate, or dignity, or dominion, except only over the fruit of his own body, is merely human; that is, it is a right that is given by the law of the land, or the constitution of the realm; thus, that the eldest son should inherit all his father's real estate is no law of nature, for by nature all his children have right alike. And even here with us, where this is the general law of inheritance, yet there are real estates in some places that descend after another manner, all to the younger son, or to all sons alike; and in some other countries, perhaps, the whole real estate of every person, after the decease of the possessor, may revert to the crown from which it was granted, and the Exchequer, or public Treasury, may be also the sole heir to his personal estate. And if no man has a natural right to an estate, much less can he have a natural right to government, I mean, out of his own family. It is the supreme power of every nation that gives this right to whom it pleases, and in such manner as it pleases. It is this supreme power of every nation that establishes in several nations a different sort of government, and which in monarchies makes the crown of one nation to be elective, and of another successive, and which, in hereditary monarchies excludes in one country all the females and their issue, and in another country admits the next in blood to inherit, whether male or female, and in the same proximity of blood prefers the male before the female. And I never yet heard it offered to be proved, that any of these conditions or limitations of succession to a crown were breaches of a law of nature, or violations of a natural right.

Now, therefore, if this be true, that no man has a natural right to the government of a kingdom, it remains, that the only right which any person hath thereto must be a legal right, that is, such a right as is given him by the law and constitution of the realm; and the law can give no right any longer than while itself is in force, and the same sovereign legislative power that can make a law has as much authority to repeal a law; and the law which gives any such right, being by sufficient authority repealed, the right which was solely founded upon that law must needs become null and void; for the right having no other foundation but that law, that foundation being removed by the

repeal of the law, the right that was built upon that, and nothing else, must needs fall to the ground.

To me, therefore, it seems very plain, that whatever right either that particular person, of the legitimacy of whose birth there is so much doubt, or any other person or persons whatsoever, that are nearer of kin to the crown than that family is on which it is now entailed, had or might be supposed to have had, in case there had been no change made in the laws relating to the succession, it is by the change that has been now made in those laws clearly cut off and destroyed; so that now we may truly declare, that neither he nor they, who by this last law are excluded, have any right or title whatsoever to the crown of this realm. For no right ever had they, or could they have, but by law, and the law has now given this right from them to others; and the supreme legislative power of the present time has certainly as much power and authority to grant this right of succession to whom it will, as the same legislative power of the former times had.

So that I think no person can now have any reasonable doubt of the lawfulness of making this declaration, which all in places and offices are bound to make, unless he doubts whether this last law, so limiting the succession to the crown, be a law of the land; that is, whether it was enacted by the supreme legislative power of the nation, viz., the king and the two houses of parliament, in whom, according to our present constitution, the supreme legislative power is most certainly lodged. And to him who has any doubt in his mind whether or no this be a law of the land, I have little to say but this, that if he himself do not remember the making of the law, which I suppose most of us do, he may look into the Statute-book, and see if it be not there printed with the rest; or he may, if he has still a mind to be more certain of it, search the Records, and see if the original act be not there entered and kept as one of the laws and statutes of this realm. Or if this will not satisfy, I leave him to be told by the lawyers, for it is not within my profession to tell him that, that according to the constitution of our government, as it now is, and as it has been for several hundred years past, the king for the time being in possession of the crown, and recognized and acknowledged by the states of the realm, is, without farther enquiry into other titles, lawful and rightful king, at least so far as that an act of parliament passed by him is a good and valid law. This I suppose the lawyers will tell him; this, I am sure, they must say, or else they must grant that well nigh half the statutes, not only of the present, but of former times, according to which they plead, and according to which the civil rights of

the subjects are judicially determined, are not good laws and statutes.

Thus I think I have made it appear that this precept, “meddle not with them that are given to change,” does not teach the duty of sovereign powers, who may lawfully make what changes and alterations in the frame and constitution of the government they themselves think fit, but only of subjects whose duty it is to be quiet and contented in their situation, and submit to that form of government which is established, believing, as the apostle teaches, that “there is no power but of God;” that “the powers that be are ordained of God;” that “whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God;” and that “they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”

And now I come to speak very briefly to the two points before proposed to be spoken to, in order to the explication of the third and last branch of the wise man’s advice to his son, “meddle not with them that are given to change;” viz., to enquire—first, who they are that may be said to be “given to change;” and, secondly, what it is to meddle with such men.

(1.) Who they are that may be said to be “given to change.” And,

1. First of all, this they certainly are who are uneasy in that state of subjection which God has placed them in, who think themselves better able to govern the kingdom than those are in whose hands Providence has deposited this care; for they who have this conceit of themselves, and yet, according to the present establishment, are never likely to be called to the government, or to any share in it, cannot but wish the destruction of the present establishment, in order to make room for themselves to come in. “O that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice.” So said Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 4). He thought the administration of the government not so well managed by his father David as it would be by himself, and this fond self-conceit naturally put him upon endeavouring to dethrone his father, and to place himself in his room.

2. They may be said to be “given to change,” and do sufficiently show that they are so, who, though they do not express such an high opinion of themselves, yet are ever expressing a very low and mean opinion of those in whose hands the government is placed; who make it their business to pry into and enquire out all the oversights or miscarriages of the present administration—and what government is there, or ever was there, so perfect, in which there have not been some oversights or miscarriages?—who set themselves to divulge and spread abroad all the ill things they know or have heard of con-

cerning their governors ; who on all occasions magnify every little failing, aggravate every small miscarriage, judge of the prudence of every undertaking by its success, and if any enter-prize that is taken in hand miscarries, will never suffer such unsuccessfulness to be attributed to chance, or providence, or any such other cause, but either to gross ignorance or unskilfulness, or wilful mal-administration. For to what purpose is all such talk, but only to discontent men's minds, to render them uneasy in their station, and to dispose them to attempt a revolution ? They who allow themselves to talk at this rate, have, it may be, too much wit to venture the burning of their own fingers ; but if they can influence and persuade others to it, that will answer their end as well. If they can but move others to mutiny and sedition, they make no doubt but they shall afterwards find good fishing for themselves in the troubled waters, and that if they can but influence the ignorant and easily-misguided multitude to pull others down, they shall afterwards be able with ease to set themselves up.

3. They may yet more truly be said to be "given to change," at least they do more plainly show themselves to be so, who, if they can find no faults in the administration of public affairs, do without scruple make them ; who set themselves to forge and frame any lies that may do hurt concerning the counsels, the actions, or the persons of their governors, in order to possess men's minds with unreasonable fears and jealousies, thereby to render the persons of their governors odious, and their government weak and precarious. But,

4. They especially are most evidently "given to change," or rather, they are more than given to it, they are actually attempting it, who, in case of any, whether true or supposed, disorders of state, go out of their own way and sphere to rectify or redress them ; and this they certainly do, who, being mere subjects, do use any other means to get their grievances redressed, than only prayers and tears. What power they may exert for this purpose, who have any portion or share of the legislature vested in them, as with us each house of parliament manifestly has, I will not take upon me to say ; they know best the extent of their own power, and upon what occasions and in what degrees it is necessary or proper to exert it, in order to preserve the balance that is established by the constitution. But it is manifestly irregular for mere private subjects to gather together in tumults, or to break out into open rebellion against the sovereign power, under pretence of doing themselves right. This is a considerable advance towards a change, and in probability, how oppressive soever the present government is, towards a change much for the worse ; the miseries of anarchy, confu-

sion, and civil war, being commonly much greater and more universally felt than the miseries occasioned by the tyranny and oppression of any government.

These are such as may be said to be “given to change.”
And,

(2.) They who may truly be said to “meddle with those that are given to change,” are such who give them any manner of encouragement in this their irregular proceeding—that is, who gladly give ear to their uncharitable, malicious, and false reports; who love to hear the government blackened and defamed; who are well pleased that the mischief is done by other hands, which they themselves, for their own safety’s sake, were afraid to undertake. They do give them still greater encouragement, who suffer themselves to be cheated into an opinion of such men’s honesty, by the loud pretences that they make of zeal for liberty and religion. Indeed, were it not for such abused and misled people as these, no sedition would ever be very formidable. But they, above all, may truly be said to “meddle with such as are given to change,” who join and take part with such whose open design it is, no matter upon what specious pretences, to dissolve the present government, and to set up a new one: they who do thus meddle with such as are “given to change,” are no whit better than those are whom they join with, and may justly expect the same reward, even that mentioned in the verse following the text; “Their calamity shall rise suddenly, and who knoweth the ruin of them both?”

I shall observe but one thing more concerning the precept in the text—I mean, the two last branches of it: “Fear the king,” and “meddle not with them that are given to change.” And this I shall do, only in order to deduce one very just, and I think also useful and very seasonable inference from the whole, and so conclude.

It is this: That these two branches of the wise man’s advice, as they are given to none but subjects; for the king himself is not to fear the king, and they who have the power of the government may lawfully, as I have showed already, not only attempt, but make changes in it, if they see cause. So they are plainly given to all that are mere subjects; and that whether the king be so good a king as they could wish for or no, or whether the government be as gentle and perfect as it might be or not. For the text takes no notice of the personal qualifications of the king, neither of his wisdom and virtue, nor of his want of them, nor yet of the excellences or imperfections of the government; but it speaks in general of any king for the time being, when it commands subjects to fear their king. And it speaks of any

sort or kind of government, that for the time being is regularly established, when it forbids the subjects to meditate or endeavour the making alterations in it.

Now if it be the duty of subjects to fear their king, even though he be not so good an one as they could wish ; and not to project or undertake to make any change in the government, even though it be for the better ; for that to be sure is what all such meddlers do think, at least it is what they will not fail to give out. If it be the duty of mere subjects to take these things as they find them, because none can regularly go about even to reform the government, but the sovereign power, or at least only such persons as have some share of the sovereignty lodged in them ; and then only according to that measure thereof which they have, and within those bounds which are set to their power by the constitution ; much rather are all mere subjects bound, both in duty and also in interest, to fear and obey a good and gracious sovereign, and not only to be quiet and contented, but very thankful too, if they have the happiness to be under a government that cannot be mended—a government that seems as perfect as a human constitution can be. And this, God be thanked, is, in both these respects, manifestly our case at this present time. For,

1. As to the constitution of our government, that is certainly the best in the whole world ; the Utopians would be hard put to it so much as to imagine a better. It is a constitution wherein the power of the sword is fully lodged in the sovereign, and yet with all the security that can be that it shall never be misused, whereby the rights and prerogatives of the crown, and the liberties and properties of the people, are with equal care preserved : wherein the sovereign has all the power that can be to do good, and none to do hurt. In a word, it is a constitution, during the continuance whereof the people can never be enslaved and ruined, but with their own consent, by representatives of their own choosing ; and it may be reasonably hoped, that they will never be so foolish as to give their consent to their own destruction. And yet,

2. If this might be supposed, we should, nevertheless, be safe from present ruin, having (God be thanked, and on this day of her Majesty's happy accession to the crown, we have more especially reason to be thankful for it—having, I say) such a sovereign now on the throne as might safely be trusted with the highest and most unlimited prerogatives, because we are morally assured she never would use them but to promote the good and welfare of her people. A queen that is entirely in the interests of her people, and cannot reasonably be so much

as suspected to have any interest of her own, distinct from theirs. A queen that has been remarkably careful about matters of piety, and expressed the most earnest desire to transmit to posterity the same excellent religion that is established among us. A queen that is so far from endeavouring to enrich herself by the spoil of her subjects, that she has not only been, beyond example, provident in the management of the public treasure, but also as frugal in her own expenses as with decency and the preservation of the honour of the crown she could be, with this only design, that she might spare as much as was possible out of her own revenue towards the public use, that so her subjects might be the less burthened.

But it would be endless to say all that might be said upon this subject, I am sure without flattery, and I verily believe without the suspicion of it; and I am sensible I have already kept you too long.

I shall therefore only add this one thing, viz., that being so extremely happy as we now are, both in the constitution of the government and in the administration of it, we have nothing else to do but to be thankful to God for these blessings, to endeavour to walk worthy of them, and to pray for their continuance. And in order to this last, to put up our hearty supplications to the throne of grace, that God would be pleased to grant the queen a long life, and to direct her counsels, and prosper her endeavours for the public good; and that when he shall be pleased to translate her hence to a better kingdom, which for our own sakes we cannot but wish may not be in our time, he will then bless our posterity with a succession of such princes, and, if it may be, from her own body, who, like her, may govern wisely, and live virtuously, and by the authority both of their laws and of their godly example, may perfect that reformation which, such is our present corruption, both as to principles and morals, it is to be feared her reign alone, though we wish it may be a very long one, will not be sufficient to accomplish.

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It is related of our Lord, that during his infancy he obeyed his earthly parents, and was subject to them; and though the nature of the work in which he was engaged did not often lead him to speak of the duty enjoined in the fifth commandment,

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whenever it did so, he never failed to give it its due weight and importance. To the ruler who asked “How he should inherit eternal life?” the reply was, “Thou knowest the commandments: do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, honour thy father and mother;” whereby, in contradiction to the vile traditions of the degenerate Jews, he asserted the authority of the decalogue, and proposed its sanctions to his own disciples. A few remarks on the reasons and the reasonableness of this command will lead us to contemplate the benefits which result to individuals, to the Church, and to the world, by its acceptance—benefits of the highest order.

It is of importance that this command should be obeyed, because it is, perhaps, the only one which applies to early childhood. The other precepts of the moral law are not likely to be violated till the mind and the body have attained a certain degree of maturity; they apply to passions of which infancy is incapable, and to feelings from which it is exempt. But this may be brought into immediate use; for as soon as a child can walk and speak, so soon, aye, and often sooner, can it obey or disobey. We are often led by the fashionable philosophical cant of the present day, to think too high of the human capacity—to forget the mist which fell upon the mind of Adam at the

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would not dare *ipso facto* to excommunicate the offender, lest that “little Zion” should speedily *ipso facto* become a desolation, and lose its local habitation and name. He is a man who is said to effect much good in a small way, but the way is truly small; and to our notions, Christianity is too magnificent a blessing to be dealt out in pennyworths and half-pennyworths. However, he sometimes perpetrates an address suited to the infant capacity; and in the absence of the pastor, he reads a tract (not an Oxford Traet, but one from the “Row,” or the “Missionary Register”) to the people from the pulpit. He occasionally makes comments upon the minister’s discourses—tells him what he apprehends might have been said, or what might have been added—that such and such an argument might very properly have been adduced, or that such and such a simile might very effectively have been employed. He gives him directions as to his public conduct, and proffers advice relative to his private walk and conversation—instucts him how he is to temporize, and how to please men, so as to keep his pulpit. He reminds the deacons of the duties of their office, and admonishes them in

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case of neglect. In the services of the sanctuary, he frequently gives out a hymn which has suddenly struck his mind as being appropriate, much to the discomfiture of the clerk’s dignity, and often to the irremediable disarrangement of the preacher’s plan. Possessing a small independence of his own, he is for ever putting the people out of temper by proposing pecuniary collections for one object or another. He generally presides at prayer meetings and at Sunday school teachers’ meetings, at experience meetings, and at female exhortation meetings; and always much against his desire he is called upon, quite unexpectedly (that is, after two or three weeks’ intense preparation), to take the lead at special opportunities. He cherishes a profundity of ignorance upon all matters connected with the Established Church, and verily believes that his building of sectarian twigs will some day usurp the place of her massive theological superstructure in the nation.

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“These writers speak of Scripture and Tradition as the two channels in which the Christian revelation has been communicated. That they mean thereby to elevate Tradition into the same rank with the written word of God, I will not believe; but the vulgar and unlearned may, and will be induced to suppose that such is their intention: and hence a fatal delusion may ensue, tending to recall the various errors and abuses of Romanism. Respecting the sufficiency of Scripture, our sixth Article of Religion is so distinct and explicit, declaring that it contains all things necessary for salvation, and requiring nothing to be believed as an article of the faith but what is contained therein, or can be proved thereby, that upon this head there hardly seems to be any room for controversy among ourselves. And, in regard to points of discipline, our Church has endeavoured to preserve a similar rule, adopting the practices of the earliest period which the records of Christian antiquity have preserved; but still, even in these cases, appealing for their confirmation or justification to the Scriptures. Thus are the institution of infant baptism and the observance of the Lord’s day enjoined, not merely on the authority of Tradition, however ancient and undoubted, but because, though not commanded in Scripture, they have the warranty of scriptural authority, inasmuch as they may fairly be inferred from what is

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actually written. To recount the evils which would flow from a large admission of traditional authority, the present occasion would not permit. But this main distinction is never to be lost sight of—what is found in the inspired Scriptures has come to us with the warranty of Heaven: what is handed down through other sources of primitive belief rests, after all, upon the authority of man, exposed to the errors, distortions, and corruptions arising from the ignorance, superstition, or presumption of our nature, from which the early ages of Christianity were not exempt. Those, therefore, who would receive Tradition as a part of revelation, must appeal to something more than earthly sagacity and judgment to separate truth from error; and they will find themselves driven to the necessity of investing some human authority with the divine attribute of infallibility—that very assumption of the Romish Church from which so many of its corruptions have been derived.”

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“ Yet all this, undeniable itself, is practically contradicted, whenever

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On the subject of education—observe, I do not wish to enter into all these questions, but I know that I should be taunted if I did not distinctly refer to them—on the subject of education, I adhere to the principles which I stated last year. I retain all the objections I had to your modified scheme; but I am not averse to a system of education; I feel all the importance of extended national education. I do every thing I can to promote it. I give it that support which some of the clamourers on the subject do not give; I give it my personal aid and support as far as I possibly can within my own private sphere. Extend education; but this I contend for—that the education in this country for the members of the establishment ought to be founded on the doctrines of the Established Church (hear); and that you ought not to lower the authority of the Church, and impair its efficiency, by appearing to tolerate it merely as a legal establishment, which you cannot dispense with, but in which you are afraid to share confidence, and to which you refuse support (hear, hear). So far from disconnecting the Established Church from the superintendance of the schools which are in connexion with it, I would support the efficiency of those schools, and maintain the authority of the Church by requiring from the Church the performance of its proper duties, and give them efficient superintendance, inspection, and controul over those schools which were in connexion with it (hear). But I do not claim for the Church any control over general education (hear). I do not claim for it any right to impose

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education, or the doctrines of the Established Church, upon those who conscientiously differ from the Church (hear, hear, hear). I will never refuse, on principle, to consent to the extension of aid for the education of those who dissent from the church; but I will not, in an attempt to unite them in common education, make any compromise of the doctrines of the Church, or exclude election at Devonport than on any other subject, although the right honourable gentleman said that he considered the ballot as neither efficacious nor secure. The right honourable gentleman entertained this opinion of its want of efficacy; but when his constituents pressed him to vote for the ballot, he could not answer their statements, and therefore he became a convert to it (hear, hear, and laughter). Did not this lead to the inference that the change of opinion took place for an election purpose (hear, hear)? But I can assure the right honourable gentleman that neither on the subject of the corn-laws, nor—which may greatly surprise him—on the Roman Catholic question in 1828, nor on any other question, did I induce Mr. Dawson to make a previous declaration of opinion, with the view of throwing out feelers—with a view of watching the direction of public opinion (hear, hear); I tell him again that I never condescended to resort to such acts—I never employed any other man to declare my opinions—I never will do so (hear); therefore, I beg that the right honourable gentleman will allow Mr. Dawson, or any other relative of mine, to express his opinions without imputing them to me, as I had no communication with him on the subject, and I will infer that the right honourable gentleman is left by his relatives to form his opinion on any subject without their consent or censure (cheers and laughter). The right honourable gentleman said, with truth, that I communicated with Mr. Dawson during the election; and it, perhaps, will appear strange that nothing of the kind, such as he supposes, took place between us. It has been said that I informed Mr. Dawson of the present motion. As I was not aware at the time that the motion would

PICA TYPE—12MO.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

Awful, indeed, and most momentous are the offences which proceed from avowed opponents ; but how much more serious an aspect do they bear, when they arise from those, who are not only followers and professed disciples, but ambassadors of Christ, and workers together with Him ? We are well aware, that it is the duty of every Christian, whatever may be his calling, to be concerned for the reputation or discredit which his life may bring upon his profession ; since no circumstances of life can place a man so far

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below the notice of the world, but that his virtues or his vices will render him, in some degree, an ornament or a disgrace for his famishing child ? Change, then, the position : suppose these poor children to be your own ; do to them as you would to your own, and you will no longer measure out your proportion of pecuniary aid by the measure of your neighbour's bounty, but you will say to yourself, “I cannot give too much : this might have been the condition of my own child : it is through God's goodness that it is not so ; and gladly do I embrace this opportunity of showing my gratitude to Him,

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WITH SPACED LINES.

This is the precept which is first to be obeyed ; because willing obedience may be yielded to this before the others can be disobeyed at all. It is also a type of the relation subsisting between us and our heavenly Father ; and the earthly things can but faintly represent those of heaven, yet this is as near an approach as can be made to represent the love of God towards his people, to picture it as that of a father to his children. Murder, theft, and uncleanness !—can these be the fruits of that spirit which makes man love his neighbour as himself ?—which induces him to protect the persons, to guard the property, to defend the reputation, and to watch over the honour of his neighbours ; which makes

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him jealous over them with a godly jealousy, and determined to suffer no sin among them ? No !—these are the instigations of him who hates with a vehement hatred ; God, because he has broken his law—and man, because the creature of God. Falsehood and perjury are equally impossible ; and covetousness, which is only to be corrected by a renewal of the mind, a fixing of the affections on things above, will be met and suppressed by reflections on the shortness of life, the certainty of death, and the awful question, “ What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? ”

And this was the nature—these the requirements of the law of Moses—the words which our Saviour hallowed by pronouncing had been spoken by Moses before. The purity of heart, and the universal love which Christ required, had been before announced

LONG PRIMER TYPE—12MO.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

At present, it is Popery, not in its full blown maturity, and in slavish subjection to the Bishop of Rome, but in its germinating adolescence and as it stood before the establishment of usurped Latin Supremacy. In short, it is the Popery of the fourth century: and most justly may the System of that and the following age be thus denominated; for, so far as PRINCIPLE is concerned, I shall ever say, in the spirit of our sixth Article, that the first step *off* the Bible is the first step *into* Popery. If, therefore, we learn the Theological System of the fourth century, we shall also learn the Theological System of Modern Tractarianism.

According to Mr. Froude's Editors, the characteristics of the fourth age, wherein it laudably differed from the Reformation of the sixteenth age whether in England or on the Continent, are, indisputably, the following.

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

1. **Celibacy**: viewed, of course, as the School of the fourth century viewed it; that is to say, not, with St. Paul, merely under the aspect of its being *convenient* to zealous Missionaries in a time pregnant with persecution, but under the new and gnosticising aspect of its being *inherently* a State of *greater* Moral Purity and Perfection than the even *divinely* ordained State of Marriage.

The species of Popery, therefore, which the Tractarians would introduce (unless, indeed, as they proceed, they should become either *more* enlightened themselves or *more* distinctly communicative to others), is that congeries of Extrascripturalities and Unscripturalities, which characterised the fourth century, which expanded into the full-blown System of the Medieval and Tridentine Church of Rome, and which were unanimously rejected, as unauthorised superstitions, by all the Reformed Churches, that of England included. In other words, they would introduce, what, according

BREVIER TYPE—12MO.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

“ I acknowledge (says Lord Ashley, in his Letter to Mr. Roundell Palmer, whose circular had called it forth), I acknowledge the latitude of speculation, which must be permitted to all the members of a common Church: but there are limits, I maintain, which must not be overpassed; at least, without a solemn and indignant protest on the part of those, who have both an opportunity and a right to give an opinion. I have endeavoured, then, to ascertain the principles of Mr. Williams: and I have found, that he is the author of the Tract, entitled, **RESERVE IN COMMUNICATING RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE**. There is no power on earth, that shall induce me to assist in elevating the Writer of that Paper to the station of a Public Teacher. I see very little difference, between a man who promulgates false doctrines, and him who suppresses the true. I cannot concur in the approval of a candidate, whose Writings are in contravention of the inspired Apostle, and reverse his holy exultation that he had not shunned to declare to his readers the whole counsel of God. I will not consent to give my support, however humble,

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

toward the recognition of exoteric and esoteric Doctrines in the Church of England, to obscure the perspicuity of the Gospel by the philosophy of Paganism, and to make the places set apart for the ministrations of the Preacher, whose duties must mainly be among the poor, the way-faring, and the simple, as mystical and incomprehensible as the grove of Eleusis.”

I. To this manly and christian statement, which evidently imports that Lord Ashley understood the eightieth Tract precisely as I had done, Mr. Roundell Palmer replied as follows.

“ I deny that Mr. Williams has taught: that The whole counsel of God is not to be freely declared to all who will receive it. I deny that he has taught: that There is, or ought to be, a distinction of exoteric and esoteric Doctrines in the Church of England. I deny (so far as I can attach any definite meaning to your words): that He has obscured the perspicuity of the Gospel by the philosophy of Paganism, or made the places set apart for the ministrations of the Preacher, as mystical and incomprehensible as the grove of Eleusis.”

Broadly to *deny* all this, is quite easy: but, to *substantiate* such a denial for the satisfaction of the readers of the eightieth Tract, will not, I suspect, be equally easy, even with the aid of the subsequent Publications of Mr. Williams. However, the denial, respecting which we may charitably say *Valeat quantum*

SMALL PICA TYPE—18MO.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

Secondly, as the virtues and vices of those who govern operate on all inferior ranks of men, in the way of natural causes, so have they another and a more extraordinary effect, inasmuch as God doth often take occasion to reward or punish a people, not only by the means of good or ill princes, but even for the sake of them. Plain instances of this kind we have recorded in Scripture, particularly where subjects have suffered for the iniquities of those who were

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

set over them, and the vengeance merited by the one hath been inflicted, and, as it were, transferred on the other. Whether it be that the good or ill conduct of rulers is sometimes owing to their people, and may therefore justly be imputed to them, or whether (as in the case of visiting the sins of parents on their children) by making them mutually liable to the consequences of each other's actions, God intends to imprint a mutual concern and endeavour for each other's welfare, and to unite them together in the strictest bands of interest and affection. Whatever the reason of God's dealing in this

LONG PRIMER—18MO.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

About midnight Lady Agnes's square was completed. After carefully folding it, Mrs. Fitzowen drew her chair still closer to the expiring fire, on which she had placed a small kettle of water to add to the half cup of milk little Sybelle had left for “poor grandmamma, who had no tea that evening.” Mrs. Fitzowen too well knew the value of self-denial to refuse the dear child's offer, and this, with a dry crust of bread, was to form her late meal. After reading for some time in a small Bible, which had been her constant study through

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

life, her thoughts wandered to Clannorris and her early days. That day she well remembered when her venerable aunt first placed in her hand the holy volume, then bright in its scarlet and gold binding; she heard, as it were, again the old lady's gentle voice—saw her doting father's smile. From these melancholy thoughts she was startled by a knock at the street door, but immediately recollecting that her landlord, who was from home, was expected to return that night. However, the step of the stranger was not that of Mr. Doone. She heard indistinctly much talking; at last she fancied she knew the voice—it was impossible! “Merciful Providence, spare my intellects for

BOURGEOIS TYPE—18MO.

36 pages on one sheet *demy*, 500 copies £5 5s.

WITH SPACED LINES.

MR. LINDELL in the House of Commons, and Lord Hardwicke in the House of Lords, have adduced certain documents, with the view of showing that the agriculturalists need entertain no great alarm at the new Tariff. We perfectly agree with the noble lord and the honourable member for the Northern Division of Durham, upon the non-necessity of alarm. But we arrive at the same conclusion with them from very different premises. They show that certain countries have hitherto *imported* more than they have *exported*, of live cattle, &c.; and that therefore the agriculturists need not be alarmed at the prospect of a diminution in the value of their

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

own live stock from any reduction in the duty on foreign stock, inasmuch as no really available quantity of live stock can be imported into this country. We shall not pause to observe that, if this be true, the Tariff is a mockery, and that Sir Robert Peel deceives all parties who vote for it under the impression that it really will reduce the price of meat, by the introduction of foreign meat. But we beg to ask, what hitherto have been the inducements in other countries to cultivate the breeding of stock for the purposes of exportation? Hitherto they have not exported—because our Tariff has almost prohibited their exports;—but reduce the Tariff, and there can be no question that a new inlet of trade will be opened of which those countries will immediately avail themselves. But then we are told,

BREVIER TYPE—18MO.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

The Archbishop of Tripoli was introduced into the clergy-rooms of Manchester on Monday evening, by the Rev. C. O. Wray, the vice-dean. There was a full attendance of clergy to receive him, amongst whom were the Revs. Hugh Stowell, H. Magrath, Molesworth, Dr. Burton, McGuire, and about thirty others. The Archbishop, a patriarch of the Greek Church, who is a remarkably handsome and intellectual man, came, accompanied by a Syrian, in the full costume of his country, and the Rev. Dr. Woolf, who acted as interpreter. The claims of the poor Christians in Syria to the kind consideration of the Manchester people, which the Archbishop warmly entered into, were allowed on all sides: and a resolution was drawn up recommending them to their notice, as well as a private subscription immediately

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

entered into by the clergy themselves. The details given by the Archbishop were of a highly interesting character.

The Bishop of Worcester has notified that candidates applying to his lordship for admission into holy orders shall be well acquainted with the history, geography, and chronology of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, with the ancient customs, festivals, and religious ceremonies of the Jews, and generally with the laws and ordinances of the Mosaic dispensation. They will be required to give a clear and satisfactory account of the evidences of natural and revealed religion—to be able to explain the most remarkable prophecies of Scripture, and to show their fulfilment—to show the force of the argument from miracles in proof of a divine revelation, and to refute the objections of Hume and others. Candidates for the order of Priests will be expected to have read in a critical and scholarlike manner the whole of the Greek Testament; from candidates for Deacon's

BOURGEOIS TYPE—12MO. FOOLSCAP.

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WITH SPACED LINES.

the agriculturalists must proportionally suffer loss. Now we remember that when the railways were in progress, it was asserted, with a confident and melancholy tone, that the demand for horses would be so materially diminished as to ruin those who bred them. But, as a matter of fact, despite of all figures, the price of horses has been maintained, and the breeding of them is as profitable as ever. The horses are required not for coaches, but for the innumerable vehicles of which the increased railway traffic has enhanced the demand. The alarm

of the agriculturists will, we have not a shadow of doubt, subside in a similar contradiction of their fears. If, by the Corn Bill, a trade in foreign corn to a certain extent be facilitated, and a proportion of the poor lands now improperly (as the Duke of Cleveland states) growing wheat, be thrown out of wheat cultivation, the farmer nevertheless will not be injured. For those poor lands, so thrown out of cultivation for wheat, will become pasture, for which pasture lands a demand will be created by the importation of cattle under the new Tariff. The cattle, so imported, will not arrive in this country in a fit state for Smithfield, but must be fattened and grazed

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WITH SPACED LINES.

Mr. Gladstone advocated the proposed duty on the ground of protection, not to any class of producers, either in England or in Canada, but to the class of consumers in other colonies, which are importing and not exporting countries. If American flour were imported duty free into Canada, Canada could export an equal quantity of her own produce, which she would otherwise have retained for her own consumption. The corn which she might so export, for instance, to Newfoundland, would then be duty free ; but the Newfoundlander would pay the same price for it as for American corn, which, when imported into Newfoundland, is subject to duty, the difference being gained by the Canadian exporter.

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

Mr. Roebuck could have understood, however he might disapprove, a wish to protect English agriculture against American produce ; but that was disavowed, and the interest of consumers in other colonies, for instance, Newfoundland, was set up. How the Newfoundland consumer was to get his corn cheaper, by reason of a 2s. duty, he could not understand. The benefit professed was solely to the consumers in non-exporting colonies, and it lay on Mr. Gladstone to show how consumers could benefit by a 2s. duty on an article consumed by them.

Lord Stanley

defended Mr. Gladstone, who had not

said that the duty of 2s. would make corn cheaper to

the Newfoundland, but that the Newfoundland

would pay as much for Canadian corn, which bore no import duty in Newfoundland, as for American corn, which would have borne a duty there ; while the

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TYPES FOR PSALMS AND HYMNS.

SMALL PICA TYPE.

JESUS shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run ;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

To him shall endless pray'r be made,
And princes throng to crown his head ;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise,
With every morning sacrifice.

LONG PRIMER TYPE.

Bless, saith the Lord, that favoured race
Whom I delight to call mine own !
And can I stem the tide of grace,
Or alter what a God hath done ?
Among the sons of Jacob he,
—Sons of his everlasting care !—

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

Hath not beheld iniquity,
Nor hath he seen perverseness there.
His arm protects them from their foes,
He shelters them beneath his wing,
His presence with his people goes,—
Their God, their Saviour, and their King.

BREVIER TYPE.

WHEN I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.
Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ my God ;

WITHOUT SPACED LINES.

The earthly things, that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to his blood.
See ! from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down ;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown ?

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